

THE HAPTIC IN LEV TOLSTOI'S *ANNA KARENINA*

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ABSTRACT

Natalia Chernysheva: The Haptic in Lev Tolstoi's *Anna Karenina*
(Under the direction of Christopher Putney)

This dissertation discusses Tolstoi's representation of touch in *Anna Karenina*, contextualizing it within the author's moral vision and the interdisciplinary discourse on haptic perception in Western philosophical, literary, cultural, and artistic traditions. Through a close reading, this dissertation argues that Tolstoi's representation of the characters' haptic sensations and physical contact with one another are strongly informed by the writer's anxieties over human physicality. In addition, by revealing a previously overlooked link between Tolstoi's moral views and his characters' physical experiences in *Anna Karenina*, the dissertation points to the potential for fruitful haptic readings of Tolstoi's other works.

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Introduction

The conflict between the body and the spirit is central to Lev Tolstoi's thought and art. An examination of Tolstoi's moral vision shows the way in which his attitude towards the body evolved over the course of his literary career. Tolstoi holds a manifestly positive attitude towards human physicality in the 1850s–60s, seeing it as an embodiment of the natural life force. He becomes suspicious about the body in the 1870s, and undergoes a grave spiritual crisis in 1879, which leads him to choose the spiritual over the physical and pronounce chastity as his ideal in the 1880s. *Anna Karenina* (1877), finished shortly before Tolstoi's spiritual crisis, reflects an early manifestation of his anxiety over the body.

Numerous scholars and commentators have discussed Tolstoi's depiction of bodily states and perceptions, both as an element of style that imbues his fiction with verisimilitude and striking vividness, and as a means of psychological and moral characterization. While a great deal of research has been done on the stylistic and psychological notions of Tolstoi's bodily descriptions, no systematic research has been conducted on the relationship between Tolstoi's representation of the body (and particularly bodily sensations) and his moral views. This research thus aims to contribute to our understanding of this link by investigating Tolstoi's representation of the body in his depictions of unity and alienation among the characters in *Anna Karenina*.

Tolstoi's personal susceptibility to sensory impressions seems to have contributed to his style. His autobiographical notes "My life" ("Моя жизнь") (1878) include sensory recollections

from his early infancy, which alone can provide the key to his first years of life, the “shadowy region between the unconscious and the conscious” (Simmons 44). Having no conscious memories, he recalls the physical sensations of being bathed in a tub and swaddled, and the not unpleasant smell of bran (23:469–70). In his diary of 1851, he records standing by an open window contemplating nature with all of his senses, except for touch: “всеми чувствами, исключая осязание, наслаждался я природой” (46:80). The precision with which he excludes touch (he enjoys the world of nature while being indoors at that particular moment) underscores his conscious attention to sensory impressions.

Tolstoi’s power of observation informs his artistic method as well. Tolstoi the artist strives to capture his or his characters’ perceptions of the world with precision in order to convey his “vision” to the reader as closely to reality as possible (“перелить в другого свой взгляд при виде природы ... [о]писание невозможно” (46:65). However, as is evident from the below scholarly investigations of Tolstoi’s portrayal of the characters’ bodies and sensory perceptions, these details serve a broader purpose in Tolstoi’s fiction, pronouncing psychological or ethical judgments of the characters described.

In *Tolstoy and Dostoevsky* (Толстой и Достоевский), Dmitrii Merezhkovskii paves the way for investigations of the body, perception, and sensory impressions in Tolstoi’s oeuvre, famously describing Tolstoi as the “тайновидец плоти/seer of the flesh” (119) and highlighting the richness of his fiction’s sensory data. Merezhkovskii underscores the expressive power of Tolstoi’s bodily imagery, by which he means the writer’s “uniquely Tolstoian” manner of capturing a sensation in all of its physiological and psychological accuracy and complexity. For instance, Nikolai’s recollection of Sonia’s kiss in *War and Peace* (Война и мир) is comprised of several interwoven sensory impressions, “запах пробки, смешанный с чувством поцелуя/the

smell of cork, mixed with the feel of the kiss” (102), rendering Nikolai’s experience rich and distinctive. Dolly’s painful sensation in her nipples in *Anna Karenina* illustrates the hardships of her experience of motherhood. In “The Death of Ivan Il’ich” (“Смерть Ивана Ильича”) the protagonist’s sensation leads to his spiritual epiphany. Ivan Il’ich recalls the abundance of saliva in his mouth when he, as a child, would get to the stone of a prune. The recollection evokes childhood memories, causing him to compare his childhood happiness to his current dread of death, and his past youthful innocence to the corruption of his adulthood. А “ничтожная подробность/trifling detail,” Merezhkovskii concludes, leads to a “обобщени[е]/generalization” (102).

Additionally, Merezhkovskii suggests that the richness and precision of Tolstoi’s depictions of his characters’ sensory impressions, as well as instances of synesthesia (although Merezhkovskii himself does not use this term), reveal Tolstoi’s “уточняющ[аяся] телесно-духовн[ая] чувствительност[ь]/subtilizing physical and mental sensibility” (103). Because of this acute sensory sensibility, according to Merezhkovskii, Tolstoi’s style anticipates so-called “Decadent” art (Merezhkovskii esteems the art movement itself, while disapproving of the term). Similarly, Nabokov observes that Tolstoi’s attention to physical detail is unusual for Russian literature of the nineteenth century, even as late as the 1880s (to which he refers specifically), and identifies Tolstoi’s style as “pre-Modernist” (149).

In keeping with Merezhkovskii’s admiration for Tolstoi’s aptitude in capturing bodily states and impressions, Prince Mirsky points to the “indivisible units of immediate perception” in Tolstoi’s fiction, which endow his narrative with “unusual freshness” (263). Prince Mirsky does not elaborate on his observation, but he seems to have in mind the richness of Tolstoi’s descriptions of reality, encompassing a variety of impressions and sensations in a single act of

perception.

In “Art as Device” (“Искусство как прием”), Viktor Shklovskii, too, praises Tolstoi for his power of observation and keen perception, pointing to his ability to capture a phenomenon in all of its immediate freshness, as if perceived for the first time. Shklovskii contends that Tolstoi’s method, which he terms *ostranenie* (defamiliarization), allows the reader to overcome the automatism of perception and *experience* a phenomenon, rather than recall it from memory (13). In other words, by describing rather than naming things, Tolstoi creates an immediate *perceptible reality* in his fiction.

Apart from seeing it as an element of style, commentators and scholars have pointed to the psychological significance of Tolstoi’s bodily imagery. Merezhkovskii made the seminal observation that Tolstoi’s characters’ bodily movements or facial expressions can reveal their inner states even better than their words: “Истинную, скрытую природу человека выдают они [человеческие телодвижения] скорее, чем слова. Один взгляд, одна морщина, один трепет мускула в лице, одно движение тела могут выразить то, чего нельзя сказать никакими словами” (98). The outer, he contends, points to the inner: the physical points to the emotional and spiritual (“от видимого — к невидимому, от внешнего — к внутреннему” 98).

Similarly to Merezhkovskii, Viktor Vinogradov’s article “About Tolstoy’s language” (“О языке Толстого”) contends that body language in Tolstoi contributes to the psychological richness of his novels. Vinogradov defines the nature of the characters’ motor expressions as “psycho-physiological” (210). He points out that bodily gestures and movements in Tolstoi are a form of language and thus meaningful—revealing a particular trait of a character’s personality. The characters’ body language—like their verbal language—serves as a means of communication: “В тех же образах речи воплощается семантика выразительного тела”

(209). The characters can understand the language of one another's facial expressions, gestures, and bodily movements:

Л. Толстой признает в сложении, в игре тела, в позах и движениях «такое же, ежели еще не большее выражение, чем в лице». Автор и герои в повестях и романах Толстого в одинаковой мере и одинаковым способом воспринимают и понимают язык тела и движений, смысл их выражений. (209)

In her study *On psychological prose (О психологической прозе)*, Lidia Ginzburg, too, emphasizes the psychological role of Tolstoi's bodily descriptions, whereby their bodily experiences and expressions are *individualized* according to their personalities: “Реализм ... заменил дедукцию наблюдением, типовое — индивидуальным” (377). Since the characters' bodily details are highly personalized, they serve as one means of their psychological portrayal. Tolstoi's keen observations of characters' gestures along with their words help him to create a verisimilar illusion of life, combining the psychological and the physiological: “Подвергнутый анализу герой погружен у Толстого в физически уплотненный мир предметной действительности” (376). Minute details of life (“подробности жизни”), including bodily expressions, do not serve his fiction's physiological naturalism but rather its *psychological* verisimilitude. Bodily details enable Tolstoi to recover and capture a person's “psychological experience”:

Толстому необходим анализ («рассудительство», «генерализация») и необходим совершенно конкретный предмет анализа — прежде всего человек, внутренний и внешний, вплоть до его жеста, слова. [...]

Но Толстой именно и не хотел оставаться на уровне скользящих восприятий, психологический опыт человека он хотел во что бы то ни стало извлечь из «бездны равнодушного забвения». И для этого-то — не для натуралистических описаний (сомнения в возможности натуралистически описать человека Толстой высказывал уже в ранних дневниках) — ему нужны были подробности жизни в их преувеличенной выпуклости и резкости. (377)

The Soviet critic Mikhail Khrapchenko also emphasizes the link between the characters' sensations and the characters' psychological portrayal in Tolstoi's fiction. For example, he

recalls the episode in *War and Peace* where Kutuzov's facial expression conveys his cordiality and perspicacity ("Реализм Льва Толстого" 387). Khrapchenko stresses the psychological verisimilitude of Tolstoi's bodily depictions rather than their richness. Similarly to Ginzburg and in contrast to Nabokov, he thus considers Tolstoi's method to be manifestly realist.

In *Tolstoy and the Novel*, John Bayley points out that the characters' bodily details not only serve as a means of their individual psychological portrayal but that they also contrast the characters to one another. For example, Bayley observes that the characters' opposing reactions to the same physical sensation reflect their opposing moods and thus their alienation from one another. While a cool summer day leaves Vronskii refreshed, it enervates Anna, from which Bayley concludes: "How could there be unity between two persons in such entirely different *physical states*?" (223). In his letter to Nikolai Strakhov on April 26, 1876, Tolstoi claims that bodily details in general, such as Anna Karenina's shoulders or the way that Stiva Oblonskii eats, are neither accidental nor merely descriptive, but constitute a "labyrinth of linkages" meant to convey his ideas (62:269).¹ The juxtaposition of the characters' sensory impressions, pointed out by Bayley, is one example of the "labyrinth of linkages" that Tolstoi describes.

Commentators' inquiries into the moral meaning of Tolstoi's bodily depictions highlight the writer's ambivalence towards human physicality. Edward Wasiolek aptly captures Tolstoi's inner conflict between the sensuous (one can add "sensory") and the moral: "Tolstoy had a sensuous hunger for life and an intellectual and moral hunger for reducing the infinity of the sensual data to the finite limits of his mind" (*Tolstoy's Major Fiction* 13). Although Wasiolek mentions this conflict only in passing, he addresses an important issue concerning the

¹ On Tolstoi's discussion of the "labyrinth of linkages," see his letter to Nikolai Strakhov of April 26, 1876 (62:269), as well as James Curtis's "The Function of Imagery in *War and Peace*," Gary Browning's *A Labyrinth of Linkages in Tolstoy's Anna Karenina*, and Elisabeth Stenbock-Fermor's *The Architecture of Anna Karenina*.

relationship between Tolstoi's personal anxiety over human physicality and the richness of sensuous and sensory data in his fiction. Wasiolek's observation, then, poses a question that inquires into the nature of the relationship between the characters' morality and their sensory experiences.

Bayley also addresses the relationship between the physical and the moral in Tolstoi's fiction. His discussion of the moral implications of the characters' physical experiences is equivocal and seems to reflect Tolstoi's own ambivalence. Bayley suggests that the characters' strong emotions are *always* expressed physically through their bodies, and are even *generated* from within, which he calls their "physical temperament" (231). Initially, Bayley argues that this connection often indicates the characters' lack of moral sense. Vronskii and Stiva Oblonskii (*Anna Karenina*), for example, pay attention to their bodily sensations rather than to the feelings of other people, indicating that they are selfish and insensitive, and causing them to hurt those around them: "the state of one's own body, not other people's feelings, tell one whether an experience is good or bad" (222). He further contends that the characters remain in flux between right and wrong, unable to achieve an ultimate spiritual transformation precisely because of the power their bodies exert over their personalities. Richard Gustafson also observes the flux between the characters' states of "residency" and "estrangement," although, unlike Bayley, he associates this flux with the human psyche rather than morality. At the same time, Bayley does not seem to view the body as something that necessarily undermines the characters' morality. Since Bayley believes that any strong emotion must manifest itself through the characters' bodies, he concludes that instances of epiphany are also expressed in the characters' acute sensory impressions—for example, those which Karenin experiences by Anna's "deathbed."

Nabokov particularly highlights the metaphysical nature of the characters' physical

experiences. For example, he praises Tolstoi's depiction of Levin and Kitty's baby's wet diaper during a rainstorm in *Anna Karenina*. He argues that it is unclear in the narrative whether the diaper is wet because of the baby or because of the pouring rain. This ambiguity blurs the boundaries between the story's humans and the world of nature, and, according to Nabokov, suggests that Levin and Kitty are immersed in nature not only physically but also metaphysically. He also admires, perhaps in keeping with his modernist appreciation of the human body, Tolstoi's depiction of Kitty's contracting muscles as she bathes her child (109) (I will discuss the significance of this detail in Chapter 4).

Like Merezhkovskii, John Weeks, in his essay "Love, Death, and Cricketsong: Prince Andrei at Mytishchi," maintains that "as it often happens in Tolstoi, a physical sensation seems to require interpretation in emotional or spiritual terms" (63). Thus, he also suggests that the outer points to the inner. He coins the term "synesthesia of moral perception" (63) to emphasize the connection between physical/sensory and metaphysical/spiritual experiences. However, he also suggests that physical sensations may not only *reflect* but also *effect* the characters' "moral knowledge," as happens to Andrei Bolkonskii before his death (*War and Peace*). Weeks argues that Bolkonskii's mundane sensory impressions, such as the chirping of a cricket, the flopping of a fly, the drunken singing of an unseen stranger, and the guttering of a fungiform candle, produce "unphysical," spiritual intuitions (73).

Weeks further points out that Bolkonskii's sensory-spiritual experiences reveal Tolstoi's ambivalent attitude towards the physical, and thus the sensory. Weeks observes that Tolstoi highlights Bolkonskii's sensory ("sensuous," to return to Wasiolek's term) experience once his spiritual experience has reached its peak. Paradoxically, instead of eliminating the corporeal aspect of Bolkonskii's experience to indicate the victory of the spiritual over the physical,

Tolstoi imbues his sensory (corporeal) perceptions with epistemological and metaphysical (immaterial) meanings:

What is striking in the fiction of this inveterate moralist is the way Tolstoy heightens the physicality of a sensation before elucidating it; he thereby implicitly rejects both psychological and physiological reductionism in constructing his model of human nature. Instead, Tolstoy offers his own synthesis, in which sensory perceptions play an epistemological, educative, and even—with the proper stimulus—a metaphysical role. (63)

Similarly to Wasiolek, Weeks's observation raises questions about the relationship between the spiritual and the corporeal in Tolstoi's thought and art. One wonders if, by intensifying his sensory impressions, Tolstoi indicates Prince Andrei's *inability* to separate himself from corporeal existence, or if, on the contrary, Tolstoi suggests that he *transcends* corporeal existence since these impressions are partially metaphysical (as Weeks argues).

In keeping with Merezhkovskii's, Wasiolek's, Bayley's, and Weeks's inquiries, this dissertation examines the relationship between the physical and the moral in Tolstoi's *Anna Karenina*. Since sexuality was one of Tolstoi's major preoccupations throughout his life, and is central to the conflict of the novel, my research proposes that Tolstoi's ongoing conflict between physical and spiritual is reflected in his representation of the most corporeal, sensual, and thus problematic of the senses: the sense of touch.

Drawing from the theoretical apparatus provided by the interdisciplinary field of haptic studies, this dissertation often uses the term "haptic" instead of "touch" and examines not only the act of touching but also a variety of other bodily sensations: tactile, cutaneous, kinesthetic, and proprioceptive, all of which result from a person's physical contact with the world. Using haptic theory, this dissertation argues that the characters' physical contact with one another—and other phenomena of their material reality—reflects their conformity to or deviation from Tolstoi's moral ideal. It demonstrates that the characters' moral shortcomings undermine their

interpersonal and intrapersonal wholes, severing their touch with one another, distorting their sensory perceptions, and alienating them from their physical surroundings. By contrast, the characters' *conformity* to Tolstoi's moral ideal makes their touch a means of interconnection, and their sensory perception a means of gathering discrete perceptual phenomena into a single whole, immersing them into the world's totality.

My study therefore is informed by (1) Tolstoi's moral views and attitudes towards human physicality, (2) commentators' observations about the relationship between the moral and the bodily/sensory within Tolstoi's fiction, and (3) insights into haptic perception provided by haptic studies. This examination will expand our understanding of the meanings that Tolstoi has encoded into bodily imagery in this novel, as well as ways in which Tolstoi's own body-spirit conflict affects his representation of the body in his writing.

This dissertation consists of three main chapters. Chapter One discusses haptic theory, tracing the history of scholarship on haptic perception in the Western philosophical tradition from antiquity to the present. Since Tolstoi was raised in the Orthodox Christian tradition, which presumably influenced his thought, the chapter also discusses Orthodox Christian notions of the body and attitudes towards the senses. However, it emphasizes that Orthodox Christian conceptions of sensory perception only influenced Tolstoi's writings *after* the writer's radical turn to Christian asceticism in the 1880–90s and did not influence earlier writings such as *Anna Karenina*.

Chapter Two discusses the development of Tolstoi's moral vision and elucidates his conception of the body through the discussion of his attitudes toward human physicality, particularly sexuality and the other corporeal "vices." It also examines the ways that he proposed to avoid, channel, or overcome the shortcomings of human flesh.

Chapter Three provides close readings of the haptic experiences of the novel's major characters, including Stiva Oblonskii, Dolly Oblonskaia, Anna Karenina, Aleksei Karenin, Aleksei Vronskii, Konstantin Levin, Kitty Shcherbatskaia, and Nikolai Levin, as well as Sergei Koznyshev and Varen'ka. The chapter demonstrates how Tolstoi uses the characters' haptic experiences to show the way in which their moral strengths and weaknesses affect their ability to establish unity with one another and with the world through touch.

I. WHAT IS THE “HAPTIC”?

Tolstoi’s anxiety about human sexuality engendered his conflicted attitude towards the body and affected his representation of the most “embodied” of the senses: the sense of touch. Tolstoi’s representation of touch and bodily sensation derives from three sources overlapping in his artistic imagination: his personal sensory experiences; Western philosophical conceptions of touch (especially those of Plato and Rousseau, whose works Tolstoi knew); and Orthodox Christian attitudes towards the body (the tradition in which Tolstoi was raised). Given the variety of personal, philosophical, and theological sources that shaped Tolstoi’s conception of touch, I propose that Tolstoi’s representation of touch can be best understood through the interdisciplinary field of haptic studies.

Haptic studies is a relatively new and rapidly developing interdisciplinary field, a subfield of sensory studies² which considers touch to be a multifaceted physiological, psychological, social, and spiritual experience, highlighting the role that bodily sensations play in shaping a person’s identity and interactions. The major contemporary interlocutors in the field of haptic studies, who shape the discipline and analyze the entire complex of human “haptic” experiences (not only “touch”), are the philosopher Mark Paterson, the literary scholars Abbie Garrington and Trish McTighe, the film scholar Laura U. Marks, and the architect Juhani Pallasmaa.

² The Internet portal <http://www.sensorystudies.org/> provides a helpful and the most up-to-date overview of the field of sensory studies, the scholars contributing to the field, publications, and course syllabi. An explanation of the term “haptics” (хаптика) in Russian can be found here: http://www.emory.edu/INTELNET/fs_haptics.html.

In his book *The Senses of Touch*, Mark Paterson introduces the term “haptic” and provides a helpful classification and explanation of what he understands “haptic” perception to be, which I will draw on in my study of the haptic elements in Tolstoi’s novel. With the term “haptic,” Paterson encompasses a variety of bodily perceptions, including but not limited to touch. Haptic experience is born of the contact between the body and the world outside the body, but it includes a broader variety of bodily sensations than simply touch. According to Paterson, haptic perception consists of the following categories: (1) cutaneous sensations that pertain to the sense of pressure, temperature, and pain; (2) tactile sensations that include cutaneous sensations but pertain particularly to the sense of pressure; (3) vestibular sensations that include the sense of balance, head position, acceleration, and deceleration; (4) kinesthetic sensations that originate in muscles, tendons, and joints, and convey the position and movement of body and limbs; and (5) proprioceptive sensations that include cutaneous, kinesthetic, and vestibular sensations and the sense of position and movement of the body in space. In addition, haptic perception, unlike touch, includes not only exteroceptive sensations (those coming from outside the body) but also interoceptive ones (those generated inside the body).

Haptic studies considers the sense of touch to be central to haptic experience and draws on the discussions of touch from a variety of disciplines, such as philosophy (Plato, Aristotle, René Descartes, Denis Diderot, Walter Benjamin, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, and Jean-Luc Nancy), cultural studies (Constance Classen and David Howes), psychological and anthropological studies (Didier Anzieu and Ashley Montagu), as well as art and art history (Alois Riegl and Filippo Marinetti). Some haptic scholars (Abbie Garrington, Trish McTighe, and Mark Paterson) also comment on touch in the Christian tradition, which they denote as another subject of inquiry in haptic studies.

1. Touch in Western Philosophical Tradition

Plato's (427–347 BC) conception of the senses was prominent in Western philosophical thought and was familiar to Tolstoi. Plato's "Phaedo"—which, according to Tolstoi's diary, he had definitely read (46:117)—contains Plato's conception of the senses in a nutshell. Plato associates the problem of sensory perception with epistemology and morality. He contrasts the body and the soul, inquiring whether man receives knowledge about the world through the body or directly through the soul, and which of the senses, if any, can be trusted to capture the image of the world truthfully and without distortion. In "Phaedo," the protagonist Socrates poses these questions:

What again shall we say of the actual acquirement of knowledge?—is the body, if invited to share in the enquiry, a hinderer or a helper? I mean to say, have sight and hearing any truth in them? are they not, as the poets are always telling us, inaccurate witnesses? and yet, if even they are inaccurate and indistinct, what is to be said of the other senses?—for you will allow that they are the best of them? [...]

Then when does the soul attain truth?—for in attempting to consider anything in company with the body she is obviously deceived. (496–97)

Separating the soul from the body, Plato views the soul as everlasting, and the body as something temporary, mortal, and thus unreliable. Such is the knowledge that man receives through his bodily senses. The body is an "inaccurate witness"—it deceives the soul and hinders her quest for truth:

[W]hile we are in the body, and while the soul is mingled with the mass of evil, our desire will not be satisfied, and our desire is of the truth. For the body is a source of endless trouble to us by reason of the mere requirement of food; and also is liable to diseases which overtake and impede us in the search after truth: and by filling us as full of loves, and lusts, and fears, and fancies, and idols, and every sort of folly, prevents our ever having, as people say, so much as a thought. (498)

Socrates concludes that a philosopher attains true knowledge not through bodily senses but through "the mind alone, not allowing when in the act of thought the intrusion or introduction of sight or any other sense in the company of reason, but with the very light of the mind in her

clearness penetrates into the very light of truth” (497). Therefore, a philosopher should have minimal communion with the body, so as to be free from its demands and needs, to disdain all vain, bodily pursuits such as nice clothing or indulgences in eating and drinking. Socrates welcomes death, because only after death is a philosopher’s soul/mind liberated from the vain, deceitful body in order to attain true knowledge: “that if we would have pure knowledge of anything we must be quit of the body—the soul in herself must behold things in themselves: and then we shall attain the wisdom which we desire, and of which we say that we are lovers, not while we live, but after death” (498).

Although Plato generally distrusts the senses, his discussion suggests that he considers some senses superior to others. For instance, in the hierarchy of the senses in “Phaedo,” Plato ranks sight and hearing as the highest, presumably because both senses are mediated, perceiving information through the medium of air without direct bodily contact. Yet, in the famous “cave allegory” of “The Republic,” Plato considers sight alone to be the supreme sense, elevating it to the status of the mind, the incorporeal means of receiving knowledge.³ Plato describes man’s spiritual ascent through the allegory of his physical ascent from a cave, in which he sees only shadows, to the Earth’s surface, where he gazes directly at the sun. This ascension represents the development of man’s knowledge: from the limited, distorted, imperfect knowledge acquired through man’s senses, to the true knowledge, or “ideas,” acquired directly by man’s mind. It is

³ Plato’s understanding of sensory perception influenced subsequent philosophy: for instance, Democritus was said to have blinded himself in order to “see” with his intellect (Jay 27). Democritus (c.460–370 BC), founder of an atomist school of Greek thought, first enumerated the senses, distinguishing sensory perception and another, superior form of knowledge. He expressed distrust in the extent to which the world as it appears to our senses corresponds to its true structure. Democritus insists that the soul or reason must clarify and, if necessary, correct sensory knowledge in order to gain knowledge of the finer, atomic structure of the external world (Jütte 34): “There are two forms of knowledge, one genuine, one obscure. To the obscure belongs all the following: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch. The other is genuine and is quite distinct from this ... When the obscure form can no longer see, hear, smell, or taste the smaller things or perceive them by touching them, and the investigation has to become more subtle, they are replaced by the genuine form which possesses a more refined organ of knowledge.” (Fragment 11; Jütte 33)

thanks to Plato's "cave allegory" that the sense of sight earned its reputation as the supreme sense in the Western philosophical and cultural tradition. Plato's conception of the senses proved extremely influential, leading to the domination of sight and the denigration of the other, "lower" senses, particularly touch, in the Western "ocularcentric" world (Jay 33).

Unlike Plato, Aristotle (384–322 BC) did not divide the soul from the body. Rather, he established a tight relationship between the two. He considers the soul to be a part of the material world and believes that the soul is made of the same, material particles as the body, being only grained more finely (13–14). Unlike Plato, who denigrates the body and its faculties as inferior to the immaterial being, Aristotle, in rejecting the immaterial being, appreciates physical life as the only form of existence and stresses the essential role of touch (and taste) as a means of its sustenance: "[b]oth these senses [touch and taste], then, are indispensable to the animal, and it is clear that without touch it is impossible for an animal to be" (104). In addition, Aristotle observes that touch occupies the largest organ of perception among the senses: namely, the flesh. Aristotle even suggests that perhaps touch is not a single sense, but rather a group of senses, as it perceives a variety of tangible sensations: for instance, hot and cold, or smooth and rough, in keeping with the field of haptic studies today. Since Aristotle struggles to pinpoint a particular organ that corresponds to the sense of touch, he concludes that touch is mediated, and that an organ of touch must be located somewhere inside the body. He concludes that flesh is not the organ of touch but only the "medium"—as air is for the senses of sight and hearing. Like air, flesh transmits a tactile signal from the object perceived to the perceiving organ. Flesh envelops the organ of the sense of touch in the same way that air envelops the senses of sight and hearing: "The flesh plays in touch very much the same part as would be played in the other senses by an air-envelope growing round our body" (68). Aristotle's discussion of the sense of touch suggests

its spatial vastness and stresses how deeply tactile perception is interwoven into a person's experience. Aristotle's conception of flesh as a medium permanently enveloping man anticipates Christian anxieties about its role. Christian thought treats the senses as a liminal space between a person and the external world, solid or porous, protecting or exposing.

Although Aristotle links touch with man's most primitive activities, associated with sustaining life, he considers it to be crucial for developing man's intellectual abilities as well. While Plato claims that the bodily senses deceive the soul and distort knowledge, according to Aristotle, bodily senses are a faculty *of* the soul. Since Aristotle considers the mind to be a part of the body, though a most refined one, he believes that man develops his intellectual abilities by developing the discriminative abilities of his senses—especially touch. Aristotle argues that the dexterity of man's hands reflects his well-developed intellectual abilities and, as such, distinguishes him from animals: “touch [...] reaches in man the maximum of discriminative accuracy. When in respect of all the other senses we fall below many species of animals, in respect of touch we far excel all other species in exactness of discrimination. That is why man is the most intelligent of all animals” (62).

Indeed, there is a certain ambiguity in Aristotle's attitude towards touch, inherent in the role of touch itself in man's experience. Like Plato, Aristotle still considers sight to be “the most highly developed sense” (86) and construes the sense of touch (which includes taste as well) as potentially corruptive, prone to gustatory and erotic pleasures, as he writes in “Nicomachean Ethics.” Aristotle believes that a person's ability to discriminate sensations fosters his intellectual development. Thus, he argues that when man uses his senses, especially touch and taste, not to train his discriminative faculties but simply to enjoy their sensations, such sensory perceptions

are “slavish and brutish” (56) and should be restricted (even if it is only the accidental touching of certain body parts during exercise in the gymnasium):

... they hardly take pleasure in making these discriminations, or at least self-indulgent people do not, but in the actual enjoyment, which in all cases comes through touch, both in the case of food and in that of drink and in that of sexual intercourse. ... Thus the sense with which self-indulgence is connected is the most widely shared of the senses; and self-indulgence would seem to be justly a matter of reproach, because it attaches to us not as men but as animals. To delight in such things, then, and to love them above all others, is brutish. For even of the pleasures of touch the most refined have been eliminated, e.g. those produced in the gymnasium by rubbing and by the consequent heat; for the contact characteristic of the self-indulgent man does not affect the whole body but only certain parts. (56)

Yet, Aristotle’s warning against the sense of touch does not override its significance. The sense of touch should be controlled, but, if used wisely, can promote man’s discriminative and thus intellectual abilities. Although Aristotle does have some reservations about touch’s predisposition to gustatory and erotic indulgence, he nevertheless considers touch to be central to the development of man’s intellect, raising man above animal.

In keeping with Plato’s privilege for sight, the least corporeal and most comprehensive of the senses, subsequent Western philosophy often regarded sight as a spiritual sense, having a “prospective” capacity (“The Nobility of Sight,” Hans Jonas, qtd. in Jay 24–25). Plato’s celebration of sight culminates in the thought of French philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650), who inherited a Platonic attitude towards the senses and was vastly responsible for the domination of “ocularcentrism” in the Western cultural tradition. Descartes had reservations about the corporeal senses’ ability to attain true knowledge about the world. In *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Descartes concludes that sensory experiences are confusing and deceive man’s mind. Man can have sensory experiences whether he is sleeping or awake, and his mind cannot distinguish between reality and illusion: “For example, I am now seeing light, hearing a noise, feeling heat. But I am asleep, so all this is false. Yet I certainly seem to see, to hear, and to be

warmed” (83). Since man can experience sensory impressions while both awake and asleep, his sensory impressions reveal nothing about the true condition of his body and his environment. Consequently, Descartes concludes that one should seek true knowledge not in the external world, which cannot be known, but in the internal world of thought, which is the only thing that certainly exists. In order to arrive at true knowledge, one must contemplate his own process of thinking by withdrawing from sensory perceptions:

I will now shut my eyes, stop my ears, and withdraw all my senses. I will eliminate from my thoughts all images of bodily things, or rather, since this is hardly possible, I will regard all such images as vacuous, false and worthless. I will converse with myself and scrutinize myself more deeply; and in this way I will attempt to achieve, little by little, a more intimate knowledge of myself. I am a thing that thinks ... even though the objects of my sensory experience and imagination may have no existence outside me, nonetheless the modes of thinking which I refer to as cases of sensory perception and imagination, in so far as they are simply modes of thinking, do exist within me—of that I am certain. (86–87)

Although Descartes distrusts both the body and its senses, he proclaims vision, as the least corporeal of the senses, to be the closest to intellect. Similarly to Plato, he describes the act of thinking as seeing with the “mind’s eye” (88). In his treatise “Optics,” Descartes famously calls sight “the noblest and most comprehensive of the senses” (57), and claims that sight is crucial not only for our survival, but also for our imagination and knowledge. Unlike the other senses, sight can perceive longer distances and embrace vaster spaces, and thus can discover new things even beyond man’s immediate reach. Descartes associates the expanse of vision with that of knowledge. He stresses that men must empower their vision with various technical devices (for instance, telescopes) to attain a more comprehensive and accurate knowledge about the world: “Carrying our vision much further than our forebears could normally extend their imagination, these telescopes seem to have opened the way for us to attain a knowledge of nature much greater and more perfect than they possessed” (57). Both Plato and Descartes conceive of the

distant and least-embodied sense of vision as a powerful source of knowledge, and, by doing so, denigrate the proximate and most-corporeal sense of touch. Contrasted to sight, touch appears to be an imperfect, limited, and corrupted form of perception, obstructing man's quest for true knowledge.

Unlike Descartes, the Enlightenment philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) follows in Aristotle's footsteps, announcing it necessary to cultivate *all* of the senses, including touch. Rousseau's approach is daring given the "ocularcentrism" that had been predominately adopted by Western philosophy through Plato and Descartes (Jay 33). Rousseau believes that the perfection of a human being hinges on the refinement of his senses. Thus, Rousseau insists that it is vital that the senses receive proper training from early infancy. In Book IV of *Emile, or on Education* (1762), "The Profession of the Vicar of Savoy" (which Tolstoi knew very well), Rousseau associates the senses with a person's "I." His sensory experiences shape his understanding of himself as a distinct self, distinguished from the external world. Without experiencing sensory impressions, man would not be aware of his existence, which means, simply put, that he would not *be*:

I exist and I have senses by which I am affected. This is the first truth that strikes me and to which I am forced to acquiesce. ...

My sensations take place in me, since they make me sense my existence; but their cause is external to me, since they affect me without my having anything to do with it, and I have nothing to do with producing or annihilating them. Therefore I clearly conceive that my sensation, which is in me, and its cause or its object, which is outside of me, are not the same thing. (270–71)

Like Aristotle, Rousseau considers touch to be a fundamental sense and praises it as such. It is distributed all over the surface of the body and is always active: it is "a continual guard to warn us of all that can do it damage" (133). Similarly to Aristotle, Rousseau also celebrates touch's discriminative capacity, confirming and thus furthering man's knowledge about the world.

Unlike his predecessors, such as Plato, Aristotle, and Descartes, Rousseau does not distinguish between ‘lower’ and ‘higher’ senses but believes that all senses should work in accord, verifying one another in order to allow man to attain true knowledge about worldly phenomena. Even sight, which Plato and Descartes pronounced to be the supreme sense closest to the intellect, may deceive. It extends far beyond man’s reach, so that the impressions man receives (for instance, the sizes of the objects and the distances to them) may be incorrect and distorted by distance.

Touch alone can confirm or refute a person’s “defective” visual impressions:

As touch concentrates its operations in the immediate vicinity of man, so sight extends its operations beyond him. That is what makes the operations of sight deceptive. At a glance a man embraces half of his horizon. In this multitude of simultaneous sensations and the judgments they call forth, how is it possible not to be deceived by any? Thus of all our senses sight is the most defective, precisely because it is the most extended; and far in advance of all the others, its operations are too quick and too vast to be rectified by them. (140)

Rousseau recognizes that, in contrast to vision, touch is limited in the span of the space it can embrace. But because it is limited, it is careful, precise, and thus reliable: “because they are most limited, tactile judgments are surer; for, extending only so far as our hands can reach, they rectify the giddiness of the other senses which leap far ahead to objects they hardly perceive, while everything that touch perceives, it perceives well” (138).

Like Aristotle, Rousseau believes that critical thinking hinges on the discriminative powers of the senses, especially the sense of touch: “To learn to think ... it is necessary to exercise our limbs, our senses, our organs, which are the instruments of our intelligence” (125). In this regard, he sees a particular danger in not developing the sense of touch. If the sense of touch is not refined, man can fall under the spell of deceptive illusions and fears—especially at night, when he cannot rely on his vision. Rousseau compares a sighted man whose sense of touch is dull to someone who is blind for half of his life: at night, he is prone to deception by illusion (a

distant tree may look like a bush, and a fly, a few inches away from his eyes, may look like a distant bird) (133–34). A man, Rousseau contends, should develop his sense of touch in order to have “eyes in the tips of his fingers [instead of] in a candle maker’s shop” (133) in order to dispel illusions and obtain true knowledge about the world.

Consequently, Rousseau sees the development of the discriminative power of the senses as the foundation of man’s morality. Rousseau explains that man possesses sensory perception from birth, but until he has learned to understand the nuances of his sensations, to compare, contrast, and derive conclusions from them, he has not learned to *sense*. To sense, for Rousseau, is not only to experience sensations, but also to make judgments about the phenomena perceived—to measure, to weigh, and to compare—to develop critical thinking, to make sense out of perceptions (132–33). The development of the five bodily senses, then, encourages the development of the “sixth sense”: the “*common sense*,” the intellect: “Thus what I would call sensual or childish reason consists in forming simple ideas by the conjunction of several sensations, and what I call intellectual or human reason consists in forming complex ideas by the conjunction of several simple ideas” (158). From critical thinking about physical phenomena, a person then learns to make more complex, moral judgments. Rousseau insists that a child should not be instructed in moral convictions, but that his judiciousness evolves naturally from his critical judgment, which in turn develops from his ability to judge his sensory impressions:

To be wise one must discern what is not wise. How will your child know men if he does not know how to judge their judgments or detect their errors? It is bad to know what they think when one does not know whether what they think is true or false. Teach him, therefore, in the first place what things are in themselves, and you can teach him afterward what they are in our eyes. It is thus that he will know how to compare the opinion to the truth and to raise himself above the vulgar; for one does not know prejudices when one adopts them, and one does not lead the people when one resembles them. (187)

Having learned to analyze his sensory impressions, man learns to make critical and then even moral judgments.

Yet, Rousseau, just as Aristotle, does not necessarily believe that the senses are always good. The senses can be either a “bane or boon” (Smith, J. 103), so they should be controlled in order to prevent desires from extending beyond one’s natural needs. Man’s moral conduct is strongly contingent on the ways in which he uses his body. For example, hard labor restrains man’s passions, whereas a leisurely and idle lifestyle encourages them:

Reading, solitude, idleness, the soft and sedentary life, and the society of women and young people are dangerous trails to blaze at his [a young man’s] age, and they keep him constantly close to the peril. It is by means of other objects of sense that I put his senses off the track; it is by setting another course for his energies that I turn them away from the one they were beginning to take. It is by exercising his body with hard labor that I restrain the activity of imagination that is carrying him away. When the arms work hard, the imagination rests. When the body is tired out, the heart does not become inflamed. (320)

To sum up, Rousseau appreciates the senses greatly, and considers the senses to be central to the development of man’s intellectual abilities and moral judgment. Although touch is the most basic of the senses and is limited in the space it can reach, it is the most accurate of the senses because it alone can verify the accuracy of the measurements estimated by the unreliable sense of sight. Touch is certainly no less, and perhaps even more, reliable than vision—especially in the dark, when man’s fingers become his eyes, allowing him to see and dispel illusions and fears. Yet, like Aristotle, Rousseau believes that the senses should be always checked, so as not to allow desires to take control over man.

Rousseau’s contemporary and fellow Enlightenment thinker Denis Diderot (1713–1784) made observations on touch that deserve special attention. In his essay “Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those Who See” (1749), Diderot, like Rousseau, praises touch for its discriminative abilities, which make it a reliable conductor of knowledge about the world: “If ever a

philosopher, blind and deaf from his birth, were to construct a man after the fashion of Descartes ... he would put the seat of the soul at the fingers' ends, for thence the greater part of the sensations and all his knowledge are derived" (104). However, Diderot's essay is notable not only for its appreciation of touch's epistemic value. Diderot vindicates touch from its widespread accusations of promoting immorality. The blind's reliance on touch had long been deemed an expression of their excessive sensuality and thus corruption. The cultural scholar Constance Classen comments on the phenomenon, prevalent especially in the Middle Ages:

[t]he blind were often depicted as being enclosed in their bodies, unable to raise their thoughts above base desires and therefore concerned only with physical gratification. Furthermore, premodern medical lore held that blindness itself could result from an overindulgence in sexual activity ... the blind, it seems, having no sight, must be all desiring touch. (52)

Arguing against this view, Diderot insists that blindness promotes a person's morality. For instance, he argues that a blind man abhors theft, since his lack of sight makes him vulnerable to both those who want to steal from him and those from whom he wants to steal (81). A blind man is also modest, since he is not sensible to certain exposed body parts that can seduce a sighted person (81). Likewise, he is less likely to be vain, since he would be attracted to another person for his/her intellect rather than for his/her looks (150). Therefore, Diderot conceives of sight rather than touch as the sense prone to seduction and corruption, radically departing from the Platonic and Cartesian elevation of sight and denigration of touch. In addition, Diderot reframes the discussion of touch, considering it not only from an epistemological and ethical perspective but also from a psychological one, discussing the role of the senses in a person's mundane life and thus anticipating twentieth-century conceptions.

Nineteenth-century European philosophy primarily shifted its interest towards the discussion of history and socio-economic problems and had little concern for sensory perception.

When discussing the senses in nineteenth-century European culture, the scholar Robert Jütte, for example, draws his conclusions not so much from philosophical discourse as from various social phenomena, including medicine, theories of art, and contemporary reactions to technological inventions.

Jütte concludes that nineteenth-century industrialization, urbanization, and technological invention led to man's alienation and isolation. On the one hand, the nineteenth century sought to enhance sensory perception: the stethoscope and the stereoscope were invented to enhance vision, the telegraph to enhance vociferation/hearing, and the railroad system to increase the mobility of the body—all introducing man to a “new consciousness of space and distance” (Jütte 181). In *Capital* (1867), Marx argues that machine labor should liberate man's muscles and relieve his nervous system's exhaustion of (Jütte 185). However, these technological inventions not only enhanced sensory perception, but also disturbed man's sensory organs and, consequently, his wellbeing. Jütte refers to an article published in 1899 in the Bern periodical *Der Neue Hausfreund* (*The New Friend of the Family*), which draws attention to the unhealthy consequences of urbanization and the harm it inflicted on the senses: city-dwellers “could feel tension all around them” and complained that “[t]he tortured brain is occupied day and night; day and night it is an overheated machine operating under maximum steam pressure” (qtd. in Jütte 183). The doctor and psychiatrist Theodor Ziehen in his article on neurasthenia, published in 1898, also points to the “modern” syndrome, which included such health issues as deterioration of vision, acute hearing impairment, and diminished or increased skin sensitivity (185).

Although industrialization affected all of the senses, Jütte argues that sight was challenged the most. On the one hand, a variety of optical devices (primarily the camera, but also such popular gadgets as the Thaumatorope introduced in 1825, and the Phenakistoscope and

Zootrope invented in the 1830s) made the nineteenth century heir to the Cartesian hierarchy of the senses, with sight dominating (187). On the other hand, these optical devices, Jütte concludes, undermined the supremacy of physical sight, disrupted man's perception of reality, and thus alienated man from the material world around him. Jütte cites the French cultural sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who noted just a few years after the invention of photography that it "dissolve[es] the solid and compact reality of everyday perception into an infinity of fleeting profiles" (qtd. in Jütte 196). Similarly, another witness of nineteenth-century visual hegemony, American writer Oliver Wendell Holmes, wrote that "matter as a visible object is of not great use any longer [...]. Give us a few negatives of a thing worth seeing, taken from different points of view, and that is all we want of it. Pull it down or burn it up, if you please" (qtd. in Jütte 196). In other words, as Jay summarizes the nineteenth-century attitude towards vision, "the initially euphoric exploration of new visual practices ultimately led to a certain disillusionment," which fed subsequent antiocular discourse (150) and prepared the rise of discourse on the significance of touch in twentieth-century Western thought.

While the above-discussed philosophers, from antiquity to the eighteenth century (Aristotle, Rousseau, and Diderot), appreciated touch as a source of knowledge about the world and a means of intellectual and even moral development, twentieth-century thinkers often focus on its role in the sphere of psychology rather than epistemology. Twentieth-century discourse on touch emphasizes its significance for human interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences, considering the role that touch plays in shaping a person's identity and the way in which touch—or the lack thereof—affects a person's realm of emotions.

Struggling to find a cure for men disrupted and alienated from one another by the tribulations of the World War I, Filippo Marinetti's (1876–1944) manifestoes "Tactilism: A

Futurist Manifesto” (1921) and “Tactilism: Toward the Discovery of New Senses” (1924) claim that touch is a desired means of fostering human empathy and facilitating a more profound connection among people. Marinetti believes that tactile sensations of textures and temperatures convey various emotional experiences (touch can be cold, persuasive, reasoning, irritating, or willful; soft, warm, sensual, witty, or affectionate), and calls for *refining* the skin’s sensitivity. He explains that tactile sensitivity can help to re-habituate people to *perceive* and *express* emotions, and thus reconnect them with one another. If, when touching one another (bumping, holding, or stroking), people fail to decode the message that the touch conveys, their communication remains obfuscated by the imperfection of their tactile communication, insincere and superficial:

I have realized that human beings speak to one another with their mouths and their eyes, but they never quite manage to be totally sincere, because of the insensibility of skin, which is ever a poor conductor of thoughts. While two individuals can communicate their most intimate selves by means of eyes and voices, the sense of touch conveys almost nothing when they bump into each other, wrap themselves around, or stroke one another. (372)

Learning to translate these tactile sensations into emotions, a person learns to communicate on a deeper emotional level, if not a spiritual one, with another person.

On the intrapersonal level, sensory impressions constitute a person’s identity and connect his past with his present, ensuring the continuity of a person’s “I.” Sensory perceptions form memories engraved in one’s body, so that a person’s past persists through his bodily sensations, gestures, and movements. In his influential treatise *Matter and Memory* (1896), Henri Bergson (1859–1941) argues that a person is never free from his past: he re-lives his past in his present every time he performs a gesture or a bodily movement that he once performed before. “Habits formed by repeated action are amassed in the body: they do not merely represent the past but act it” (37). In Marcel Proust’s (1871–1922) novel *In Search of Lost Time* (1913–27), sensory

impressions become the protagonist's gateway into his past. The taste (and, one can add, the touch) of cake unexpectedly triggers the protagonist-narrator's long-lost memory of his aunt, who once gave him a madeleine cake dipped into her tea on a Sunday morning back home in Combray. This sudden, involuntary recollection proves key to other distant memories and gives him a creative impulse, allowing him to rescue his vanished past from oblivion. In addition, and perhaps even more importantly for our understanding of touch, in recapturing his past, the protagonist regains his sense of the continuity of his "I." This, in its turn, gives him the key to his future, in which he becomes the narrator capturing his rediscovery of his past. One touch, which takes place in a transient present instant, then extends into both his past and his future, giving him the sense of immortality ("I ceased now to feel mediocre, accidental, mortal" (Proust 50–54)). Through the taste-touch of the cake, Proust's protagonist is reintegrated with his past, recovers the wholeness of his personality, becomes immersed in the texture of life, and even transcends its boundaries—overcoming his sense of personal transience.

Touch is at the center of the ontological structure, something that not only unites people with one another but stitches all things together into a single indivisible whole, as the phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961) argues in his essay, "The Intertwining—The Chiasm" (*The Visible and the Invisible*) (1964). Merleau-Ponty models his ontology on the sense of touch, since touch represents the idea of direct contact between two bodies more vividly than any other sense. For Merleau-Ponty, all other senses serve the same purpose as touch—to facilitate contact between bodies—so he considers the other senses to be only modifications. He views the universe as an interlinked whole, whose constituent elements are open to and interconnected with one another through acts of perception—whether visual, aural, or tactile.

Depicting the hiatus between all things, Merleau-Ponty introduces the “element” of “flesh” (139), giving this element a distinctly corporeal name although it is not, strictly speaking, a material element. “Flesh,” he argues, is born from the act of perception/touch between things, and coils over things, blurring their boundaries and making things open to one another. In other words, “flesh” binds all things together:

Once again, the flesh we are speaking of is not matter. It is the coiling over of the visible upon the seeing body, of the tangible upon the touching body, which is attested in particular when the body sees itself, touches itself seeing and touching the things, such that, simultaneously, *as* tangible it descends among them, *as* touching it dominates them all ... The flesh ... is not contingency chaos, but a texture that returns to itself and conforms to itself. (146)

“Flesh” is the space where active acts of perception (seeing and touching) and passive acts of perception (being seen and touched) meet, making interaction possible. Every body is “sensible sentient” (136), both the object and the subject of perception, simultaneously participating in acts of seeing and being seen, touching and being touched. Therefore, every act of perception is reversible, simultaneously active and passive: one who sees is also seen, and one who touches is also touched, which facilitates interconnectedness of all things. Therefore, “flesh” is not an obstacle between things but “a means of communication” (135), where things’ boundaries blur and interpenetrate.

Through the act of perception, two—the perceiver and the perceived—are melded into one indivisible whole, becoming one universal body: “the seer and the visible reciprocate one another and we no longer know which sees and which is seen” (139). Merleau-Ponty compares such “synergy” to a human body, whose two hands are separated but still interconnected through the body’s intercorporeality: “When one of my hands touches the other, the world of each opens upon that of the other because the operation is reversible at will, because they both belong (as we say) to one sole space of consciousness ... because they are the hands of one same body” (141).

It follows from Merleau-Ponty's body- and touch-centered ontology that man is never isolated. As both the subject and the object of perception, he naturally partakes in the universal interconnectedness of all things and shares all others' worlds. However, if the senses are natural gateways that open people to one another, melding them into one whole, one can speculate that an individual is alienated if they use their senses to perceive their own rather than another's body, become insensitive to another's touch, or hurt another without feeling the pain that they cause.⁴

Going back to Marinetti's, Bergson's, and Proust's understanding of touch as a profoundly personal sense, deeply woven into one's emotions, the anthropologist Ashley Montagu (1905–1999) considers touch within a person's emotional sphere. In his book *Touching: The Human Significance of Skin* (1986), he argues that touch is a powerful expression of empathy and love: “[w]here touching begins, there love and humanity also begin—within the first minutes following birth” (xiv). He argues that physical touch and the emotional sphere are linked anatomically through the ectoderm, one of the three embryonic cell layers, which gives rise to both the skin and the nervous system: “The nervous system is ... a buried part of the skin” and the skin is an “external nervous system” (5). Therefore, by touching a person's skin, one penetrates a person's inner sphere of emotions: stroking children, caressing lovers, and touching the ill to alleviate their pain and suffering, we exchange affection and empathy. Montagu argues that “the communications we transmit through touch constitute the most powerful means of establishing human relationships, the foundation of experience” (xv). Depriving themselves of tactile interaction, people loosen their connections with one another. Lacking profound

⁴ Merleau-Ponty's ontology does not allow for isolation, yet it is important for my research to speculate what kinds of perception can lead to the isolation of one person from another in order to reveal instances when Tolstoi's characters are united with or alienated from one another.

interaction, man fails to know another person and thus is diminished to a “faceless figure” stripped of individuality (xiv). Montagu argues that one can truly know another person only through touch, and thus he considers touch as a powerful means of communication and communion between people. However, the lack of tactile interaction between people leads to their emotional alienation from one another.

The philosopher Richard Kearney (b. 1954) stresses the dramatic “excarnation” (4) affecting those who substitute real, physical touch with digitalized and therefore distant and detached forms of communication. In his article “Losing our Touch” (2014), he argues that tactile privation, or indirect touch communicated through a proxy, is a symptom of emotional detachment, reflecting a person’s estrangement, loss of empathy, and stunted capacity for intimate emotional connection. Kearney’s particular preoccupation is with the proxy of modern digital technology. Having invaded even love and sex, the most intimate and tactile spheres of human life, digital technology deprives man not only of physical touch but also, subsequently, of natural human empathy, rendering him unsympathetic and emotionally distant: “touched by nothing” (4). The absence of physical touch, in this case direct contact with another’s body, deprives man of his capacity to reveal his inner, intimate world, and limits his ability to sympathize and experience true emotional reciprocity.

To conclude, the sense of touch has engendered a variety of contradictory interpretations in the Western philosophical tradition, revealing thinkers’ many anxieties. On the one hand, touch was denigrated as the most corporeal and imperfect of the senses. While vision was understood as a metaphor for intellectual insight (in Plato), and was deemed to expand and promote a person’s imagination and knowledge about the world (in Descartes), touch was considered to be proximate, limiting a person’s concerns to the reality within his reach: the realm

of base, carnal interests (in both Plato and Aristotle). On the other hand, touch was also praised for its discerning capacity and the precision of knowledge that it grants, particularly in connection with the dexterity of hand, which elevates human beings above other animals (in Aristotle) and gives a person knowledge more accurate than vision (in Rousseau and Diderot).

Touch facilitates the universal intertwinement of all things—whether it be actual physical contact or contact mediated through other senses (in Merleau-Ponty). Such a universal unity implies that, in touching the other, one is simultaneously touched. If this unity were to be realized in practical terms, no party would be able to harm another without simultaneously feeling the pain that they inflict. On the level of human relations, Merleau-Ponty's ontology suggests that, if a person is not hurt by the harm he inflicts on the other, it indicates his isolation from the whole. Similarly, psychology and anthropology deem touch to be the most powerful mediator of interpersonal relations. Being the most intimate of the senses, touch conveys love, affection, and empathy, and facilitates profound emotional unity among people. When one reaches out and touches the body of the other, one overrides the distance—both physical and emotional—that separates them. Yet, when touch is avoided, denied, or is indirect (communicated through a proxy, as Kearney suggests), it indicates a person's alienation from all others.

Analyzing the haptic perceptions of Tolstoi's characters in *Anna Karenina*, I will focus in particular on whether their touch is direct or indirect, indulged or avoided, on whether it refines or distorts their knowledge about the world, encourages or undermines their morality, and facilitates or undermines their unity.

2. The Body and the Senses in Orthodox Christianity

Since Tolstoi grew up and lived in a manifestly Orthodox Christian milieu, one may ask whether an Orthodox conception of the body and the senses had any influence on Tolstoi, especially as pertaining to *Anna Karenina*.

Orthodox Christianity, in some ways, shares Western philosophy's epistemological and ethical preoccupations. It strives to define when the body and the senses bring a person closer to a union with the divine and, consequently, with other people, and when, on the contrary, they impede his spiritual progress. Although Christianity shaped Tolstoi's moral views, especially his conception of the body (as I demonstrate in Chapter 2 in which I focus on Tolstoi's moral vision), Christian attitudes regarding the senses seem to have had little effect on Tolstoi's representation of touch in *Anna Karenina*.

The Orthodox Christian tradition advocates a more positive conception of the body as compared to that of the Western Church. Orthodox Christianity draws strongly on the Apostle Paul's conception of the body. In the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Paul emphasizes that the body is not something evil and opposed to the spirit, but rather is the Holy Spirit's temple, and thus must be cared for and kept in purity: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor 6:19–20). A person's "body" belongs to "God," just as a person's soul.

In Orthodox theology, Christ's body represents the unity of all people with one another and with God through the flesh that Christ accepted in his earthly life. When God descended into humanity, he shared in its now-corrupted nature, allowing him to redeem human nature from this corrupted state by sacrificing his own body. The Apostle Paul envisages the Church through the

analogy of the human body in order to emphasize its members' unity in Christ: "[f]or as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:12–13). The fact that God descended into a corrupt human body and suffered in order to restore its unfallen state proves, in the Orthodox imagination, that the human body was worth saving and thus emphasizes its initial goodness. More importantly, this line of logic also emphasizes that human beings share their corporeal nature with Christ, participating in unity with God corporeally as well as spiritually.

Even though God's incarnation rescued human beings from the corruption and mortality inherent in all living matter and gave them the hope for resurrection after death, it did not cleanse their physical bodies from crude physical longings and needs—presenting a challenge to their spiritual life. In order to resolve the conflict between the body's inherent goodness and man's unholy desires, which seem to originate in his body or at least engage it, the Orthodox tradition makes an important distinction between the "body" and the "flesh." Paul calls these bodily needs and desires "flesh," distinct from "body," which he sees as a "temple of the Holy Ghost." As Bishop Kallistos Ware comments, while "Paul's view of the flesh is sombre, his estimate of the body is highly affirmative" (94). The goal of ascetic practices, including self-mortification, is to cleanse the "body" (the "temple of the Holy Ghost") from all that is "flesh." In *Unfading Light*, the Russian religious philosopher Sergius Bulgakov (1871–1944) summarizes the nature of the Orthodox ascetic discipline, bearing in mind the Pauline difference between the "body" and the "flesh," as the following: because "[Orthodox] Christianity sees in the body not the fetter but the temple of God," ascetic practice is, then, "the struggle not against the body but *for* the body"

(254–55). By this, Bulgakov means that, by mortifying his body, an ascetic strives to purify his body of its “fleshly” desires and needs and restore the “body’s” inherent uncorrupted state, making it—as much as is possible in earthly life—a vessel worthy of God’s grace.

Orthodox Christianity sees human nature as “twofold—both the material and the spiritual,” both because man was initially created from matter but in the image of God, and because God descended into human flesh but deified it with his presence, intertwining the corporeal and the incorporeal planes of human being (Louth 97). Because human beings are “twofold,” their religious life encompasses both spiritual and corporeal aspects, engaging not only their minds but also their bodies. The fundamental principle of Orthodox Christianity is that “God uses materiality as the medium of his salvific power” (McGuckin 358), so Orthodox tradition insists on the importance of a believer’s daily bodily and sensory participation in worshipping God. Orthodox worship appeals not only to a person’s vision, through icons, but also to his other senses, immersing a person in spiritual life through corporeal participation. By looking at icons, a person looks not only at a physical image, but also appeals to the divine that the image portrays. Icons communicate the presence of an invisible spiritual plane in the visible corporeal world, “remind[ing] us that the boundary between the heaven and earth is indeed thin” (117), as Louth explicates. As Ware comments on the participation of the other senses in worship, “[a]ll five senses have a part to play in worship: not only sight and hearing, but taste (at the Eucharist), touch (through anointing, through the laying-on of hands, through kissing the dead body, and also through kissing the holy icons in church and at home), and even smell (through the aromatic substances in the chrism, and through the burning of incense both in church and in the home)” (Ware 104). The purpose of sensory participation in worshipping God

is that the spiritual reaches out to a person, entering his body (and thus also his soul, which is linked) through his senses as he participates in a spiritual act.

Aligning with the Orthodox Christian tradition, Tolstoi does not view the body as something inherently corrupt that must be done away with. As I discuss in more detail in Chapter 2 on Tolstoi's moral vision, he increasingly insists on the necessity of controlling vicious "fleshly" desires (sex, gluttony, idleness, and vanity). However, up until the late 1870s, he considers human sexual activity to be morally acceptable (but only within the boundaries of marriage, and then only if sex yields a child). While he censures the body for the "fleshly" desires which undermine a person's spiritual resolve, he praises the body when it is used for other moral and proper activities, such as serving other people (this idea begins to dominate his thought in the 1880s).

Christian Orthodoxy's influence on Tolstoi's conception of the senses is not especially evident in the works written before his radical turn to asceticism in the 1880s. Although Tolstoi's other fictional writings are beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is worth pointing out that one can find echoes of the Christian Orthodox conception of the senses in his later works, particularly his short story "Father Sergius" (1898). It is unlikely that Tolstoi adopted this deliberately, but his representation of the senses in "Father Sergius" strikingly resembles the way in which the senses are presented in the Hesychast tradition, particularly in John Climacus's (579–649) *Ladder of Divine Ascent* and Gregory Palamas' (1296–1359) *The Triads*.

Both of these theologians portray the senses as doors between a person's spirit and the outward, corrupted world, and thus both consider the senses potentially dangerous for a person's spiritual resolve. The goal of ascetic practices for each of these theologians is to achieve a state of inner stillness (or, *hesychia*) in which, by God's grace, he can acquire the presence and

knowledge of God: he “liv[es] outwardly with men but inwardly with God” (Climacus 52), and his “mind[,] purified by prayer, acquires and sees in himself the grace promised to those whose hearts have been purified” (Palamas 42). In order to achieve this state of inner stillness, or *hesychia*, an ascetic should mute his senses. Climacus represents the world as a place swarming with demons who incite a person’s sensuality, pride, and other vices. He suggests that a momentary external sensory impression can stir up a person’s desires: “with an eye alone, with a mere glance, by the touch of a hand, through a song overheard, the soul is led to commit a definite sin of unchastity without any notion or evil thought” (183). He reiterates the danger of sensory impressions in the next paragraph, writing that “a pleasing sight, a touch of the hand, the scent of perfume, or the sound of sweet voices can be enough to generate evil thoughts” (183). So, a person is attacked by the seductive impulses of the world through all of his senses.⁵ Yet, since Climacus is particularly preoccupied with human sexuality, which he sees as an especially grave sin, he concludes that touch, directly engaged in consummation of sexual desire, is the most dangerous: “[t]he body can be defiled by the merest touch, for of all the senses this is the most dangerous” (178). Climacus concludes that, in order for one to preserve his purity, he should render himself insensitive to all worldly impressions, especially ones appealing to his touch: “Let your hand be dead to everything natural or otherwise, to your own body or to that of another” (178). In other words, a person should mute his senses, rendering them insusceptible to all worldly disturbance.

Palamas suggests that an ascetic should collect his thoughts in the inner space of his body, in his heart (which hesychasts see as a locus of human spirituality), and alienate himself

⁵ Climacus includes vision, hearing, touch, and smell. He omits taste, probably not because he excludes it from the dangerous senses but rather because it is a less ‘momentary’ sense—one can witness or overhear something or be touched in passing, but one cannot taste in passing. So, taste is simply an unfitting example in this particular context.

from all external impulses reaching him through the senses: “gather together our mind, which has been dissipated abroad by the senses, and lead it back again into the interior, to the selfsame heart which is the seat of the thoughts” (Palamas 43). While Climacus censures touch because of its inherent carnality, Palamas’ attitude towards touch is more ambiguous. On the one hand, touch is susceptible to passion and, even once these passions are defeated, touch challenges an ascetic’s most basic need for physical comfort: since touch is always active, it is the hardest sense to disregard and mute. On the other hand, because touch is associated with pain, Palamas considers touch to be particularly useful for a person battling his passions: “For as all who have experienced ascetical combat, sensation painful to the touch is of greatest benefit to those who practice inner prayer” (48). Touch, therefore, is not only the most carnal but also the most spiritual of the senses, since it helps a person to subdue his passions and purify his body from all vicious impulses and desires. Finally, when a person becomes insensitive to the tactile impulses of his body, it indicates that he has won his combat over the corrupted, carnal, aspects of his personality.

In “Father Sergius,” Tolstoi, too, portrays the senses as a liminal space between the corrupted world and the protagonist’s inner, spiritual realm. Throughout the story, the protagonist, Kasatskii (aka Father Sergius), struggles to ward off the irritating and seductive impressions of the external world that prevent him from finding inner peace. When he tries to escape from worldly vanity into a monastery, he can *see* and *hear* people chatting during the service, triggering his judgment. He can also *smell* the tobacco and wine on the general whom he used to serve, who now comes to the church to mock him, challenging his vow of humility. Tolstoi conveys Kasatskii’s stirred sensuality via tactile sensations. When the lascivious woman, Makovkina, appears at the door of his secluded cellar, he becomes aware of the textures of the

things around him: Tolstoi describes the floor as cold and moist when Kasatskii bows and touches it with his forehead as he prays, trying to suppress his surfacing attraction. In order to seduce him, Makovkina also confuses his senses. While he hides from her in an adjacent room, so that she cannot touch him directly to show off her bare skin, she is sure to make suggestive noises that incite his imagination: she steps on the floor with her bare feet, taking off her dress and stockings with a sound loud enough for Kasatskii to hear through the wall, thus compelling him to picture these sexually charged activities against his will.

In keeping with the Christian ascetic tradition, Kasatskii uses physical pain to subdue his sexual desire: he tries to burn his hand in a candle flame, and when he can no longer endure it, takes the more radical step of cutting off his finger. Neither Climacus nor Palamas offers self-mutilation as a way of dealing with temptation. Tolstoi clearly relies on other ascetic sources (he actually mentions the life of a saint whose example Kasatskii tries to follow by burning his hand on the candle). However, Palamas does mention *pain* as a means of taming carnal desires, so Kasatskii's attempts to subdue his desire recall Palamas' views on pain's spiritual benefits, and thus the benefits of the sense of touch.

While Tolstoi problematizes the senses in "Father Sergius" in a manner similar to the Orthodox theologians, he does not do so in *Anna Karenina*. The novel was written before Tolstoi's views on human corporeality turned to radical asceticism, which exacerbated his fear of the body, compelling him to believe that the body should be protected and thus rendered insensitive to any external influences that could trigger unwanted desires. In *Anna Karenina*, both the *indulgence* in bodily/sensory delights and the *lack* of bodily/sensory engagement point to the characters' shortcomings. For instance, Stiva's overindulgence in physical sensations is one of the signs of his moral corruption (as I discuss in the chapter on Oblonskii), whereas

Vronskii's, Karenin's, Koznyshev's and Varen'ka's alienation from the physical is associated with their inability to connect with others on a deep emotional level (albeit for different reasons, as I show in the respective chapters). While writing *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoi viewed *both* of these extremes to be wrong modes of living.

II. TOLSTOI'S MORAL VISION: BETWEEN THE CARNAL AND THE SPIRITUAL

Throughout his life, Tolstoi's attitude towards human physicality became increasingly negative. Tolstoi underwent several crises that made him particularly anxious about the possibility of reconciling carnal impulses with spiritual aspirations. *Anna Karenina*, written at one of the turning points in Tolstoi's meditation on morality, encompasses both Tolstoi's moral views prior to writing the novel and those that evolved while he wrote it. Therefore, this chapter focuses on Tolstoi's moral vision from the early 1850s to the late 1880s in order to trace the development of Tolstoi's conception of human physicality and pave the way for an analysis of the haptic in *Anna Karenina*.

1. Sexuality: Between Sex and Abstinence

Tolstoi's conflict between the sexual and the spiritual is evident from his earliest writings of the 1850s. In his diary of 1851, young Tolstoi ponders the mysterious link between the body and the soul, which incites man's contradictory impulses: "В таинственной связи души и тела заключается разгадка противоречащих стремлений" (46:140). A student of the Enlightenment (Eikhenbaum, *Molodoi Tolstoi* 23, 44), he advocates self-perfection as his life's goal: "Счастье есть добродетель. Юность чувствует это бессознательно, но различные страсти останавливают ее в стремлении к этой цели" (46:213–14).

Young Tolstoi considers sexual desire itself to be natural and permissible, and finds its satisfaction immoral only outside of marital bonds: "[Э]то влечение естественное и которому удовлетворять я нахожу дурным только по тому неестественному положению, в котором нахожусь (холостым в 23 года)" (46:91). If marriage is not an option, Tolstoi suggests

channeling (wicked) sexual desires into (virtuous) activities, or, in other words, sublimating the desires of the body and relieving those desires through activities that do not contradict his spiritual values: “Средство против как той, так и другой причины [body and imagination that incite his desires] есть труд и занятия, как физические — гимнастика, так и моральные — сочинения. ... [Н]ичто не поможет, исключая силы воли и молитвы к Богу — избавить от искушения” (46:91). Tolstoi even believes that human flesh could be entirely transformed through self-perfection: “необходимо усовершенствование, при котором удовлетворение плотских потребностей не противоречит или даже совпадает с удовлетворением духовных потребностей” (1854; 47:38). Tolstoi does not explain how exactly this self-perfection might be achieved, but given the Enlightenment rhetoric in the passage, he most likely envisioned it in the vein suggested by Rousseau—that is, through the aforementioned “physical” and “spiritual” activities of gymnastics, writing, and prayer.

Although Tolstoi seems to consider *marital* satisfaction of sexual urges to be moral in the early 1850s, he finds this justification somewhat problematic even by the mid-1850s. In letters to his beloved Valeriia Arsen’eva, he expresses his views on love and marriage using the imaginary family of the “Khrapovitskiis,” once again betraying his anxiety over sexuality. He hopes that, in marriage, the spiritual will eventually surpass the carnal. Tolstoi sees marriage as a primarily spiritual union, wherein the spouses should help each other avoid immoral “faux pas”: coquetry, jealousy, distrust, futility, vanity, impulsiveness, and disorganization in daily life (60:119). Since marriage is a spiritual sphere, Tolstoi finds it necessary to rid it of carnal corruption. Tolstoi, thus, divides love into two stages: an imperfect, sensual stage of infatuation and a perfect, spiritual stage of marriage. Contrasted with marriage, Tolstoi sees infatuation as something that impedes man’s self-perfection: it makes man particularly vain, unsatisfied with himself, and

unhappy. Once brought together by infatuation, the spouses, then, should help each other to overcome these wicked qualities, the “faux pas.” Tolstoi accepts infatuation and its sensual impulses as only a temporary, unstable state, naturally morphing into the “spiritual” state of family life (Eikhenbaum, *Lev Tolstoi: piatidesiatye gody*, 348–49).

In the 1860s, procreation becomes particularly important to Tolstoi’s thought. Tolstoi believes that as long as sexuality leads to childbirth, it is not only natural and moral, but even desirable. Tolstoi celebrates sexuality yielding a child as a manifestation of the “force of life.” In *War and Peace*, those characters who procreate embody the “force of life,” whereas those who derive sexual pleasure without procreation are those who presumably alienate themselves from this “force” and thus act against it. Hélène Kuragina dies prematurely during an abortion, which she undergoes to eliminate an “inconvenient” outcome resulting from her having “two husbands.” Hélène’s unwanted pregnancy and the decision to abort her child are a consequence of her lascivious lifestyle. Her abortion and death are news in wider society, but no one feels sorry for her. Tolstoi suggests that Hélène’s death is a result of her lewd conduct. On the contrary, Natasha Rostova’s “порывы,” or outbursts of sensuality (her childish kissing of her friend Boris or her sensual infatuation with the lascivious Anatol’ Kuragin), embody the “force of life” since they lead her through a series of infatuations and disillusionments to the happy self-realization of marriage and motherhood: “Все, знавшие Наташу до замужества, удивлялись происшедшей в ней перемене, как чему-то необыкновенному. Одна старая графиня, материнским чутьем понявшая, что все порывы Наташи имели началом только потребность иметь семью, ... она всегда знала, что Наташа будет примерно женой и матерью” (12:265). This novel illustrates Tolstoi’s ideal union between the carnal and the

spiritual in the 1860s: Natasha's sensual impulses do not make her licentious or immoral, but only reflect the intensity of the "force of life" driving her toward marriage and childbirth.

A parallel, less-optimistic tendency develops in Tolstoi's thought of the 1860s. Having faced the deaths of his brothers in 1856 and 1860, Tolstoi begins to question the world's design, universal justice, the meaning of life, and ultimately the existence of God: "К чему все, когда завтра начнутся муки смерти со всею мерзостью подлости, лжи, самообманыванья, и кончатся ничтожеством, нулем для себя. ... [П]оложение, в которое нас поставил кто-то, есть самый ужасный обман и злодеяние" (letter to A.A. Fet on October 17/29, 1860; 60:358).

Tolstoi's spiritual doubts recur consistently throughout the 1860s, ending in a grave spiritual crisis at Arzamas in 1868, after which Tolstoi's views shift towards asceticism in all spheres. He describes his experience in fictional form in the story "Memoirs of Madman" ("Записки сумасшедшего") (1883–86) and meditates on the causes and outcomes of his crisis in the essay "Confession" ("Исповедь") (1878). In the story, the protagonist travels to Arzamas in order to buy an estate. Spending the night in a hotel, he is suddenly overcome with the terror of death:

... но вдруг представилось мне, что я умру тут в чужом месте. И мне стало жутко. [...] «Да что это за глупость, — сказал я себе. — Чего я тоскую, чего боюсь». — Меня, — неслышно отвечал голос смерти. — Я тут. Мороз подрал меня по коже. Да, смерти. Она придет, она вот она, а ее не должно быть. [...] Все существо мое чувствовало потребность, право на жизнь и вместе с тем совершавшуюся смерть. И это внутреннее раздиранье было ужасно. (26:468–70)

He tries to pray to silence his fears, but prayer brings only temporary relief. He questions the meaning of life in the face of inevitable death. Finding none, he ponders suicide, but hesitant to commit the act, he is caught up in a vicious cycle: "Я живу, жил, и должен жить, и вдруг смерть, уничтожение всего. Зачем же жить? Умереть? Убить себя сейчас же? Боюсь.

Дождаться смерти, когда придет? Боюсь еще хуже. Жить, стало быть? Зачем? Чтоб умереть. Я не выходил из этого круга” (26:472).⁶

Tolstoi, then, describes the protagonist’s rediscovery of faith as a nearly miraculous episode, a revelation from God. Tolstoi compares the protagonist’s (and his own) spiritual loss with being lost in the winter woods, anticipating inevitable death. The terror of imminent death causes the protagonist to appeal to God more vigorously than ever. As he prays, he realizes that God does not reject him, but that he himself has turned away from God because of his own moral corruption: “Я хотел по-прежнему допрашивать, упрекать Бога, но тут я вдруг почувствовал, что я не смею, не должен, что считаться с ним нельзя, что он сказал, что нужно, и что я один виноват” (26:473). Tolstoi suggests that the protagonist *does* receive God’s help, since he turns out to be near the forest’s edge and thus not lost in the “wilderness” at all. In realizing his moral corruption, the protagonist finds God; he is disgusted by his own corruption and recognizes that his past values and beliefs were wrong. The outcome of the protagonist’s crisis, however, seems to tell more about Tolstoi’s personal views in the 1880s than about the facts of his immediate post-Arzamas experience. Consistent with Tolstoi’s social-moral views of the 1880s, the protagonist realizes the falsehood of social inequality and finds himself to be a member of the human community in God:

Она рассказала о своей нужде. Я приехал домой и, когда стал рассказывать жене о выгодах именья, вдруг устыдился. Мне мерзко стало. Я сказал, что не могу купить этого именья, потому что выгода наша будет основана на нищете и горе людей. ... Главное, истина того, что мужики так же хотят жить, как мы, что они люди — братья, сыны Отца, как сказано в Евангелии. (26:474)

⁶ In *Anna Karenina*, Anna, Levin, and Vronskii experience similar crises, although each of them experiences them differently. Unable to see the meaning of life, Anna commits suicide, while Levin overcomes his spiritual crisis and finds God, like the protagonist of this story. (Although, Levin’s conception of God is different from the protagonist’s, given the five-year gap between the works during which Tolstoi’s moral views turned to asceticism). In contrast to Anna and Levin, Vronskii’s “spiritual” crisis and subsequent suicide attempt, portrayed as the realization of a romantic cliché, appear vain—like Vronskii himself.

Similarly to the story's protagonist, Levin immerses himself in the world of the peasantry, which proves a spiritual epiphany for him and resolves his spiritual agony by appealing to popular wisdom and faith. However, unlike the protagonist, Levin does not believe that he oppresses the peasants and does not renounce his social origins, as Tolstoi insists upon in his post-Anna Karenina writings, both fictional and non-fictional.⁷

Tolstoi's spiritual crisis and subsequent conversion made him more austere and critical of the carnal, especially of sexuality. As Spence observes, Tolstoi's "desire to devote himself to God is the result of the need to overcome death, and overcoming death means willingly sacrificing the life that death will destroy" (Spence 14). The "force of life" with which Tolstoi associates sexuality in *War and Peace*, of the 1860s, is not only physical but also spiritual. Tolstoi continues to associate sexuality with the "force of life" in the 1870s, as is evident from his depiction of Levin and Kitty's love in *Anna Karenina*, which encompasses both sensual and spiritual aspects. But he also begins to view sexuality as something vicious, which endangers a person's morality, disrupts family union, and undermines human relations. (For instance, Stiva's promiscuous nature casts his family into havoc and indirectly contributes to the ruin of Anna's, as she first encounters Vronskii in Moscow when restoring Stiva's marriage; Anna's flirtation with Vronskii then hurts Kitty, who is in love with him.) Tolstoi's views on family are reactionary to the "woman question" broadly discussed in Russia and Europe at that time. Tolstoi sees family as the "holy nucleus of social life" (Medzhibovskaya 143), insisting that the role of woman is procreation and that her place is among the family. Tolstoi believes that childbearing is not only commanded by God but is also naturally desired by woman herself, so that the "joys of love" are joyful not because of the pleasure they bring but because of the pregnancy they yield.

⁷ I discuss Tolstoi's understanding of human community in God and his social views resulting from this belief later in this chapter, where I elucidate Tolstoi's attitudes towards dogmatic Christianity.

As he writes in the essay “Так что же нам делать?” (“What is to be done?”) (1883–84): “Вы ... знаете тот истинный, Богом положенный людям труд и знаете истинные награды за него, то блаженство, которое он дает. Вы знаете это, когда после радостей любви вы с волнением, страхом и надеждой ждете того мучительного состояния беременности” (25:408).

Tolstoi sees family as a supreme value and sees woman’s major role in consolidating the institution of the family. He strongly objects to the emancipation of women. Tolstoi insists that *all* women, whether of childbearing age, still unmarried, or physiologically unable to have more children (“genderless,” as he quite scornfully calls them) must stay within the family circle. The “genderless” woman should help her childbearing peers cope with their toil by working as a midwife, nanny, housekeeper, or (uncharacteristically for Tolstoi’s philosophy, but not for his younger personal life) prostitute. Women should protect the institution of the family namely by procreating and nurturing, helping to raise children, and even prostituting themselves to protect virginal and childbearing women from the pursuits of unmarried men:

Призвание женщины все-таки главное — рождение, воспитание, кормление детей. ... [Н]икакой надобности нет придумывать исход для отражавших и не нашедших мужа женщин: на этих женщин без контор, кафедр и телеграфов всегда есть и было требование, превышающее предложение. — Повивальные бабки, няньки, экономки, распутные женщины ... В этом-то периоде представьте себе женщину, подлежащую искушениям всей толпы неженатых кобелей, у к[оторых] нет магдалин, и главное — представьте себе женщину без помощи других несемейных женщин — сестер, матерей, теток, нянек. И где есть женщина, управившаяся одна в этом периоде? (1870; 61:233)

In addition, the family union provides a safe outlet for men’s and women’s sexual urges, protecting them from falling into the sin of lechery. Thus, Tolstoi objects to the possibility of divorce since it ruins the sacred union of the family, which is commanded by God, and thus promotes dissolute behavior: “Допустить свободную перемену жен и мужей (как этого хотят

пустобрехи либералы) – это тоже не входило в цели провидения по причинам ясным для нас – это разрушало семью” (61:233). Tolstoi considers marriage to be a union based not only on love (or, not necessarily on love at all), but also on the spouses’ duty towards one another. The duties include not only the spouses’ faithfulness to one another, but also their readiness to stay in the family in case one of them is unfaithful. So a man, he believes, should not be allowed to divorce his wife simply because he does not want to live with her any longer—regardless, it seems, of which party was unfaithful: “Divorce cannot be admitted because it cannot be left to the will of every man to decide when he not more can live with his wife and shall repudiate her [sic]” (written in English, 1888; 64:194).

Anna Karenina tackles many of the questions that preoccupied Tolstoi in the 1870s in fictional form. Family integrity, the danger of sexual desire, women’s roles in family and society, and divorce are themes central to both Tolstoi’s thought of the 1870s and to the novel as a whole. However, Tolstoi’s opinions on these matters are less equivocal in his letters and essays than in his novel, where his solution to the questions is more ambiguous. Anna is married off without love to a man much older and “colder” than she, which of course cannot justify, in Tolstoi’s view, her passionate infatuation with another. This leads to the desertion of her family and son, but at least evokes the readers’ compassion as she struggles to choose between her motherly and sensual loves.

Both the sensual and the moral are present in Anna and Kitty, albeit in different proportions. Although Anna is Stiva’s sister and presumably shares his carnal, passionate nature, Anna has had no affair before meeting Vronskii. Unlike Stiva, Anna cannot simply hide and enjoy her passion either: she can never erase the shame, guilt, and awareness of her own moral fall. Kitty (for all of her “spirituality”) is not devoid of sensual stirrings, either. Although Tolstoi,

for the most part, merely hints at manifestations of Kitty's and Levin's sexuality, he does refer to their honeymoon, the details of which are omitted, as the most shameful time in their marriage when they were hardly themselves—suggesting their passionate sex life.

Finally, because of Karenin's complex personality and Anna's tragic fate, divorce appears to be a more complicated matter in the novel than it does in Tolstoi's letters and essays. In the story, Karenin takes revenge on Anna for her infidelity by refusing to grant her a divorce, but justifies this revenge by referencing the amorality of divorce and the husbandly duty to protect his wife from improper conduct.

By the end of the 1880s, Tolstoi limits sexuality solely to the biological function of procreation, considering, it seems, the “joys of love” to be unnecessary (if not immoral). He insists that coitus is *only* acceptable when it serves procreation, and is a sign of moral corruption if it serves to satisfy sexual desire without conceiving a child. Tolstoi contrasts the natural, procreative sexuality of animals with the corrupted, pleasure-driven sexuality of men, and contends that men should return to the primeval, innocent state of animals that abstain from sexual activity if it cannot lead to procreation: “животные отдаются половому общению только тогда, когда может родиться плод. Человек непросвещенный, каковы мы все, готов на это всегда и даже выдумал, что это потребность. ... Да, во всем животном человеку надо сознательно дойти до животного” (64:277).

Since Tolstoi censures sexuality that does not lead to procreation, he also condemns marriage without procreation. Marriage is no longer defined as a legitimate space to contain sexuality—only childbearing is. Tolstoi contends that marriage without procreation is sinful and even worse than prostitution and onanism, as he argues when responding to the American writer Alice Stockham about her book “Tokology” (1888; 64:202). Although Tolstoi still justifies

sexuality with procreation as he did earlier, his views become more rigid. Tolstoi tries to “stifle the voice of flesh, and to enable the voice of the spirit to be heard in its stead” (Connolly 268). Tolstoi draws an increasingly clear line between the spiritual and the carnal, and strives to cleanse the body of the carnal. Sexuality is no longer an embodiment of the divine force of life as in *War and Peace*, a joyous precursor to pregnancy as in the essay “What is to be done?”, or a duty ordained by God as in Tolstoi’s letters, but as something organic whose only goal is procreation, a function of sustaining biological life.

By the very end of the 1880s, Tolstoi’s quest to resolve the conflict between the carnal and the spiritual ends in his rejection of the body in favor of the spirit. Tolstoi concludes that even procreation cannot justify sexual relations, and even within marriage. Tolstoi argues that marriage should be a union of kindred spirits who are ready to provide each other with moral guidance rather than a union of infatuated lovers. In contrast to the 1850s, Tolstoi excludes love-infatuation from his ideal of marriage, even as a preliminary stage. Tolstoi insists that man should be guided not by love, by which he apparently means infatuation, but by calculation (“по расчёту”)—the expectation that his future wife will encourage her husband’s morality (1887; 64:50). In 1889, in response to a young woman who has written to him for guidance, Tolstoi contrasts spirituality with marriage and advises celibacy as a moral way of living. Tolstoi now sees marriage as a frivolous occupation, rejects procreation as a woman’s major role, and considers the routine of marriage and childbearing to be inferior to the celibate’s life filled with good deeds:

[К]ак человеку, в котором начинается внутренняя духовная работа, советую вам, как можно больше удаляться от всего, что в нашем обществе поддерживает в девушке мысль о необходимости и желательности брака и располагает к нему: романы, музыка, праздная болтовня, танцы, игры, карты, даже наряды. Право, приятнее выстирать себе рубаху (а уж для души насколько полезнее), чем проиграть вечер в *secrétaire* даже с самыми остроумными людьми. ... Безбрачная

жизнь, наполненная делами добра, безбрачная потому, что дела, наполняющие эту жизнь, все выше брака. (1889; 64:289)

In his essay “Царство божие внутри вас” (“The Kingdom of God is within You”) (1891–93), he contends that man should strive in his behavior for perfect chastity, as commanded by Christ: “Идеал — полное целомудрие даже в мыслях; заповедь, указывающая степень достижения, ниже которой вполне возможно не спускаться в достижении этого идеала, — чистота брачной жизни, воздержание от блуда. И это составляет вторую заповедь” (28:80). Tolstoi fails to reconcile the conflict between the carnal and the spiritual, and the only solution he finds is to idealize the innocent child-like state that precedes the awakening of sexuality. The innocent, chaste love completely devoid of sensual stirrings should preclude the transition to sensuality and thus would preclude the conflict that torments him throughout his life. Tolstoi writes in his diary that he wants to write a story “о любви целомудренной, влюбленной, как к Соничке Калошиной [Tolstoi’s childhood friend], такой, для которой невозможен переход в чувственность, которая служит лучшим защитником от чувственности. Да не это ли единственное спасение от чувственности? Да, да, оно и есть” (1890; 51:53)). In the end, Tolstoi rejects sexuality and accepts love only if it is innocent, chaste, and devoid of sensuality.

Tolstoi views a child-like, chaste love as his ideal, since he considers sexuality to be something that potentially undermines man’s spiritual perseverance. But, since the ideal is hardly attainable, Tolstoi is conflicted about sexuality: on the one hand, it is entangled in love and marriage, and is inevitable as the means of procreation. On the other hand, it incites demanding, uncontrollable urges that challenge man’s virtue. Tolstoi never accepts sexuality in itself but tolerates it with concessions. He maintains that sexuality should be suppressed by proper physical and spiritual activities such as writing, exercising, enforcing self-control, and prayer, or

that it should be bounded by marriage, limited to procreation, or ideally eliminated (which is a hardly achievable goal, as he finally admits).

2. The Society: Between Nature and Civilization

In his correspondence with his friend, the philosopher Nikolai Strakhov in 1870, Tolstoi expresses his typical conflict between the carnal and the spiritual: “[B] нас две природы — духовная и плотская. ... [E]сть такие несчастные как мы с вами, у которых центр тяжести в середине и они разучились ходить и стоять. ... Все в том мире, в котором мы жили, так перепутано — все плотское так одето в духовный наряд, все духовное так и облеплено плотским, что трудно разобрать” (1870; 62:502). Trying to uncover the sources of his personal inner conflict, Tolstoi concludes that it is, in many ways, informed by the loose morals of the society in which he was raised.

Tolstoi’s criticism of society derives from his larger meditation on nature and civilization, with which he was preoccupied from the early years of his career. In his understanding of the conflict between nature and civilization, Tolstoi is a student of Rousseau (Eikhenbaum, *Lev Tolstoi: semidesiatye gody*, 217). Similarly to Rousseau, Tolstoi sees nature, and everything associated with it (plants, animals, children and peasants—both of whom are not yet corrupted by civilization), as innocent, whereas he views civilization as both corrupted and corrupting.

For young Tolstoi, nature is devoid of vice and corruption: it is the realm of the spiritual. In 1857, affected by the beauty of the night, Tolstoi ponders the meaning of life in general and his life in particular, appealing to God for an answer:

Ночь чудо. Чего хочется, страстно желается? не знаю, только не благ мира сего. — И не верить в бессмертие души! — когда чувствуешь в душе такое неизмеримое величие. Взглянул в окно. Черно, разорванно и светло. Хоть умереть.
Боже мой! Боже мой! Что я? и куда? и где я? (47:141)

Similarly, in a letter to A.A.Tolstaia in 1859, he directly associates nature with religious experience: “Вы смеетесь над природой и соловьями. Она для меня проводник религии” (60:294). He portrays nature as a spiritual force also in the novel *Казаки* (*The Cossacks*) (1858–62): Olenin, in recognizing his love for Maryanka, embraces a kind of nature-mysticism. He believes that nature itself encourages his love for her, and, in loving her, he feels that he becomes an integral part of all of God’s joyous world.

Following Rousseau, Tolstoi also believes that man is born innocent. He idealizes children, viewing them as the natural bearers of spiritual truth, beauty, and goodness—virtues that they still hold before becoming exposed to the corrupting influences of civilized society. In his essay “Who Should Learn Writing from Whom; Peasant Children from Us, or We from Peasant Children?” (“Кому у кого учиться писать, крестьянским ребятам у нас или нам у крестьянских ребят?”) (1862), Tolstoi insists that the state of child-like innocence is an ideal for which grown men, corrupted by society and alienated from nature, should strive:

Здоровый ребенок рождается на свет, вполне удовлетворяя тем требованиям безусловной гармонии в отношении правды, красоты и добра, которые мы носим в себе; он близок к неодушевленным существам – к растению, к животному, к природе, которая постоянно представляет для нас ту правду, красоту и добро, которых мы ищем и желаем. ... Человек рождается совершенным, – есть великое слово, сказанное Руссо, и слово это, как камень, остается твердым и истинным. Ребенка развивают все дальше и дальше, и все дальше и дальше удаляются от бывшего и уничтоженного первообраза, и все невозможнее и невозможнее делается достижение воображаемого первообраза совершенства взрослого человека. *Идеал наш сзади, а не впереди.* (italics are in the original; 8:323)

Consistent with his belief in the innate innocence of children, Tolstoi often portrays children and the age of childhood as a moral ideal in his fiction. Nikolen’ka, in the novel *Childhood* (*Детство*) (1852), is Rousseau’s “natural man,” and he “embod[ies] natural human vitality, the ‘innocent merriment’” (Orwin, *Consequences* 150, 154). He exists in a flux of feelings and sensations, but he is “naturally moderate and naturally good” (Orwin, *Tolstoy’s Art and Thought*

63). Although he is not free from sexual stirrings, he is unaware of them and thus remains in a state of innocence (Salaman, *The Great Confession* 74). In *Anna Karenina*, Anna's son, Serëzha, too, is a "compass" revealing to Anna and Vronskii their deviation from the moral way of living: "Ребенок этот с своим наивным взглядом на жизнь был компас, который показывал им степень их отклонения от того, что они знали, но не хотели знать" (18:196). Anna's own childhood and the memories of her youth, surfacing shortly before her suicide, reveal her past innocence and present deviation from this innately innocent state.

Since peasants are immersed in the world of nature through their life and work, untouched by the corrupting forces of civilization, Tolstoi considers them innocent as well. Being at one with the world of nature, peasants possess a kind of spiritual knowledge that allows them to face death in peace—a knowledge that is inaccessible to the gentry because of their deep-rooted moral corruption. In the story "Three Deaths" ("Три смерти") (1859), Tolstoi contrasts the death of a peasant and the death of a tree, both of which belong to the world of nature, to the death of a noblewoman, a member of the gentry. He portrays the deaths of both the peasant and the tree as peaceful and beautiful: they live and die in harmony with nature, and it is understood that their own deaths are a part of a natural circle. The peasant does not revolt against death because he knows that it is inherent in all. On the contrary, the noblewoman, who is alienated from nature, dies in emotional and spiritual agony, unable to find comfort in her confused moral values. Unlike the peasant's faith (which is not even necessarily Christian, but rather originates from his close contact with nature), the gentry woman's Christianity is spiritually vacuous and thus cannot safeguard her from the terror of dying.⁸ As Tolstoi comments on the story in his letter to his aunt Aleksandra Tolstaia on May 1, 1858:

⁸ I discuss Tolstoi's attitudes towards dogmatic Christianity in more detail later in this chapter.

Моя мысль была: три существа умерли – барыня, мужик и дерево. – Барыня жалка и гадка, потому что лгала всю жизнь и лжет перед смертью. Христианство, как она его понимает, не решает для нее вопроса жизни и смерти. Зачем умирать, когда хочется жить? В обещания будущие христианства она верит воображением и умом, а все существо ее становится на дыбы, и другого успокоенья (кроме ложно-христианского) у нее нету, – а место занято. ... Мужик умирает спокойно именно потому, что он не христианин. Его религия другая, хотя он по обычаю и исполнял христианские обряды; его религия – природа, с которой он жил. Un brute есть счастье и красота, гармония со всем миром, а не такой разлад, как у барыни. (60:265–66)

Tolstoi blames the gentry's alienation from natural innocence and goodness on the ills of social progress, as he argues in his essay "Progress and the Definition of Education" ("Прогресс и определение образования") (1862). He believes that technological and social achievements encourage the gentry's idleness, self-indulgence, and exploitation of others, causing their moral corruption (23:40–41). On the one hand, as Tolstoi explicates in "Who Should Learn Writing from Whom," progress brought man the luxuries and comforts of the civilized world, including railroads, electricity, steam, and printing (which Tolstoi, when advocating the ruinous effects of education, includes in the list of technical achievements corrupting man's morals) (8:334). On the other hand, progress at the same time has spoiled him, drawing him away from the primeval simplicity and moderation which Tolstoi sees as the ideal: "раз развращенное население удобствами комфорта, никогда уже не может быть возвращено к первобытной простоте и умеренности" (8:335–36).

As previously mentioned, Tolstoi underwent a grave spiritual crisis in Arzamas in 1869, which reverberated throughout the 1870s. Tolstoi examines the causes of his crisis and concludes that the moral (or, rather, immoral) atmosphere of the elite social circle in which he was raised nurtured his alienation from faith. He recalls that, at school, one of his schoolmates suddenly announced that God did not exist, and that his older brothers were fascinated by the idea, encouraging young Lev's agitation as well: "Мы все, помню, оживились и приняли это

известие как что-то очень занимательное и весьма возможное” (23:1). When his older brother Dmitrii became religious and decided to lead a pure and virtuous life, adults, including his school mentor, and youthful peers, including his brothers, laughed at him. From this experience, Lev learns that religion is not a serious matter, that one should observe its rituals but need not follow its instruction: “учить катехизис надо, ходить в церковь надо, но слишком серьезно всего этого принимать не следует” (23:2).

His pursuit of self-perfection under the influence of Enlightenment values soon transformed into the pursuit of self-perfection in general (“совершенствование вообще”). It thus encouraged him to seek the “virtues” praised in society—to be stronger, better, more important, and richer than others: “[и] очень скоро это стремление быть лучше перед людьми подменилось желанием быть сильнее других людей, т. е. славнее, важнее, богаче других” (23:4). This corrupted social environment encouraged his youthful passions, hampering his spiritual aspirations. His efforts to be “good” (“[я] всю душой желал быть хорошим”) were scorned, whereas his deeds of moral corruption were cheered:

Без ужаса, омерзения и боли сердечной не могу вспомнить об этих годах. Я убивал людей на войне, вызывал на дуэли, чтоб убить, проигрывал в карты, проедал труды мужиков, казнил их, блудил, обманывал. Ложь, воровство, любодеяния всех родов, пьянство, насилие, убийство... Не было преступления, которого бы я не совершал, и за всё это меня хвалили, считали и считают мои сверстники сравнительно нравственным человеком. (23:5)

Tolstoi also condemns the role of writer and teacher, which, he seems to suggest, society has imposed on him: “от чина, данного мне этими людьми, — от чина художника, поэта, учителя, — я не отрекся” (23:6). Literary circles, a layer of elite society, have encouraged his other vices, such as pride and the arrogant belief that he knows “the truth” and can teach it to others: “[и]з сближения с этими людьми [писателями] я вынес новый порок — до

болезненности развившуюся гордость и сумасшедшую уверенность в том, что я призван учить людей, сам не зная чему” (23:6).

Tolstoi examines various spheres of knowledge (social sciences, natural sciences, and philosophy) only to conclude that no rational knowledge could answer a person’s inmost queries about the meaning of life or console him in the face of death. As Tolstoi writes about his brother’s death: “Умный, добрый, серьезный человек, он заболел молодым, страдал более года и мучительно умер, не понимая, зачем он жил, и еще менее понимая, зачем он умирает. Никакие теории ничего не могли ответить на эти вопросы ни мне, ни ему во время его медленного и мучительного умирания” (23:8). Tolstoi’s dissatisfaction with rational knowledge grows as he realizes, for instance, that the proponents of social progress, a popular idea in Europe that presumably sought to ameliorate the life of humankind, approved of execution, which was both immoral and inhumane:

... я понял — не умом, а всем существом, — что никакие теории разумности существующего и прогресса не могут оправдать этого поступка и что если бы все люди в мире, по каким бы то ни было теориям, с сотворения мира, находили, что это нужно, — я знаю, что это не нужно, что это дурно и что поэтому судья тому, что хорошо и нужно, не то, что говорят и делают люди, и не прогресс, а я с своим сердцем. (23:8)

In addition, Tolstoi considers social science to be wrong because it ignores the value of the individual, suggesting that a person can only understand who he is by understanding the collective. This, Tolstoi insists, is impossible, since the collective consists of similarly confused individuals: “... глупость, этого воззрения состоит в том, что ... [д]ля того чтобы понять, что он такое, человек должен прежде понять, что такое всё это таинственное человечество, состоящее из таких же людей, как и он сам, не понимающих самих себя” (23:19).

Natural science can only describe various aspects of a person's life in physical terms. But for all of its detailed scrutiny, natural science never seeks to answer the question of the *meaning* of an individual's life, and thus is useless for Tolstoi's inquiry, which is spiritual in nature: "При таком ответе оказывается, что ответ отвечает не на вопрос. Мне нужно знать смысл моей жизни, а то, что она есть частица бесконечного, не только не придает ей смысла, но уничтожает всякий возможный смысл" (23:21).

Various philosophical thinkers (Solomon, Socrates, Buddha, and Schopenhauer, whose theories had fascinated Tolstoi) devalue life and lead a person away from understanding its meaning. Tolstoi concludes that these philosophers have propagated alienation, teaching him that life is evil and even welcoming death as either a desirable liberation or an inevitable end with which one must reconcile:

«Жизнь тела есть зло и ложь. И потому уничтожение этой жизни тела есть благо, и мы должны желать его», говорит Сократ.

«Жизнь есть то, чего не должно бы быть, — зло, и переход в ничто есть единственное благо жизни», говорит Шопенгауэр.

«Всё в мире — и глупость и мудрость, и богатство и нищета, и веселье и горе — всё суета и пустяки. Человек умрет, и ничего не останется. И это глупо», говорит Соломон.

«Жить с сознанием неизбежности страданий, ослабления, старости и смерти нельзя — надо освободить себя от жизни, от всякой возможности жизни», говорит Будда. (23:26)

Neither could Tolstoi find a way to overcome his crisis among the members of his social circle. Some people, he observes, simply do not ask the questions that torment him ("подход неведения" 23:27). Other people delight in life's pleasures, seizing the moment and blindfolding themselves with earthly enjoyments in order to avoid recognizing that their lives have no meaning ("подход эпикурейства" 23:27). Tolstoi notices that this approach is most typical of those in his social circle. Members of a third group choose suicide as a way to deal with the fact that their lives have no meaning ("выход силы и энергии"). Tolstoi confesses that he

considered this approach, regarding it as the noblest, and wanted at some point to end his life (“Я видел, что это самый достойный выход, и хотел поступить так” 23:28). The fourth solution is to continue living, even while realizing that life is evil and meaningless (“выход слабости”). This, Tolstoi admits, is what he actually chose, but it nonetheless only prolonged his spiritual agony.

The path that Tolstoi eventually discovers, and which leads him out of the crisis, lies within the irrational knowledge given only by true faith:

Я вспомнил, что я жил только тогда, когда верил в Бога. Как было прежде, так и теперь, сказал я себе: стоит мне знать о Боге, и я живу; стоит забыть, не верить в него, и я умираю. [...]
«Живи, отыскивая Бога, и тогда не будет жизни без Бога». И сильнее чем когда-нибудь всё осветилось во мне и вокруг меня, и свет этот уже не покидал меня” (23:45).

The awareness of God’s presence in the world gives Tolstoi a sense of life’s meaningfulness.⁹ Emblematically, Tolstoi finds true faith and rediscovers the meaning of life among the common people. Tolstoi realizes that the common folk are not tormented by the spiritual crises typical of his social circle, because they have not been corrupted by rational knowledge, art, philosophy, and the lifestyles and actions of the gentry:

[В]се одинаково и совершенно противоположно моему неведению знали смысл жизни и смерти, спокойно трудились, переносили лишения и страдания, жили и умирали, видя в этом не суету, а добро. ... Со мной случилось то, что жизнь нашего круга – богатых, ученых – не только опротивела мне, но потеряла всякий смысл. Все наши действия, рассуждения, наука, искусства – всё это предстало мне как баловство. Я понял, что искать смысла в этом нельзя. Действия же трудящегося народа, творящего жизнь, представились мне единым настоящим делом. И я понял, что смысл, придаваемый этой жизни, есть истина, и я принял его. (“A Confession”; 23:39–40)

Since Tolstoi views peasant life as the ideal, he also idealizes manual work, which he considers to be a spiritual activity preventing a person from falling into a variety of vices (such

⁹ Levin’s discovery of faith in *Anna Karenina* repeats Tolstoi’s nearly verbatim.

as idleness, despondency, and exploitation of others). Through manual work, Tolstoi believes, the peasants are immersed in the world of nature not only as passive observers, but as co-creators of life (“[д]ействия же трудящегося народа, творящего жизнь”). By doing manual work, Tolstoi seems to suggest, a person can become at one with the world of nature and be cleansed from their corruption through its purity.

Tolstoi himself seeks close contact with nature: he even temporarily abandons his literary career in 1861 to devote a year to managing his estate, educating the peasants, and doing physical work in the field. Tolstoi finds working in the field with the peasants to be physically and emotionally rewarding and renewing, as his letters of the 1870s suggest: “возвращаюсь потный с топором и заступом, следовательно, за 1000 верст от всего искусственного, и в особенности от нашего дела ... [Я], благодаря Бога, нынешнее лето глуп, как лошадь. Работаю, рублю, копаю, кошу и о противной лит-т-тературе и лит-т-тераторах [sic], слава Богу, не думаю” (letter to A.A. Fet; 61:235), “я с утра до вечера работаю — руками — и ничего не думаю и не помню. [...] Я теперь уже вот 6-й день кошу траву с мужиками по целым дням и не могу вам описать не удовольствие, но счастье, кот[орое] я при этом испытываю” (letter to S.S. Urusov; 61:237). In *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoi describes Levin’s time managing his estate and working in the field as devoted to spiritual activities, juxtaposing these pursuits with both the gentry’s corrupted lifestyle and the intellectual “hedonism” of Levin’s half-brother, Koznyshev.

Tolstoi’s appreciation of manual work as a moral and spiritually healing activity persists throughout the 1880s, when he particularly comes to emphasize the moral aspects of manual work (which I consider in the following section of this chapter).

3. The Spiritual: Between the Metaphysical and the Moral

Tolstoi's meditations on Christianity and his understanding of the spiritual realm within the Christian tradition contribute to the way in which he sees the role of the body in this body-spirit conflict, especially beginning in the 1880s.

Young Tolstoi imagines the spiritual realm as something above or beyond the material world. He believes that it is possible to attain this realm through faith and prayer, and imagines it as a supernatural, fleshless state. In his diary, he records his spiritual experience when he prays, feeling exalted and connected with the divine:

Мне хотелось слиться с существом всеобъемлющим. Я просил простить преступления мои; но нет, я не просил этого, ибо я чувствовал, что ежели оно дало мне эту блаженную минуту, то оно простило меня. ... Нет, вот оно чувство, которое я испытал вчера – это любовь к Богу. Любовь высокую, соединяющую в себе все хорошее, отрицающую все дурное. ... Я не чувствовал плоти, я был – один дух. (1851; 46:62)

The spiritual experience described here is “most purely Rousseauistic” in its optimism and is generally uncharacteristic of Tolstoi, who was tormented by spiritual doubt (McLean, “Rousseau’s God,” *In Quest of Tolstoy* 158). But it is typical of young Tolstoi, and it is important for tracing the evolution of Tolstoi’s spiritual views. Here, Tolstoi captures the spiritual as a mystical experience in which he transcends the material world to connect with a spiritual realm. He sees the spiritual as fleshless (“не чувствовал плоти”). Furthermore, this metaphysical vision of the spiritual implies divine intervention into the affairs of the material world, and suggests man’s ability to achieve the spiritual realm through faith and prayer alone without requiring practical moral deeds.

However, already by 1854, Tolstoi suggests establishing a “rational religion” (Spence 14) cleansed of its metaphysical component, which will not promise rewards in the afterlife but will serve the more practical, “earthly” goal of uniting people: “Мысль эта — основание религии,

соответствующей развитию человечества, религии Христа, но очищенной от веры и таинственности, религии практической, не обещающей будущее блаженство на земле. ... Действовать сознательно к соединению людей религией — вот основание мысли, которая, надеюсь, увлечет меня” (47:37). Here, Tolstoi rejects the “fleshless” spiritual state in favor of an earthly organization of people; in other words, he rejects the metaphysical in favor of the physical, the mysterious in favor of the moral.

As previously mentioned, Tolstoi was profoundly affected by the deaths of his two brothers, leading to the Arzamas crisis and episodes of spiritual doubt in the 1860s and 1870s. The death of his second brother, Nikolai, in 1860, was particularly traumatizing. Consumed by grief, Tolstoi suffers great distress and thinks of death as life’s ultimate end, meaning that there is no spiritual, metaphysical realm of afterlife. Tolstoi realizes that the body is mortal and thus temporary, and is terrified to think that one’s “I” ends with the destruction of one’s body. As he writes to Afanasii Fet in his letter of October 17/29, 1860:

Правду он говаривал, что хуже смерти ничего нет. А как хорошенько подумать, что она все-таки конец всего, так и хуже жизни ничего нет. Для чего хлопотать, стараться, коли от того, что было Н. Н. Толстой, для него ничего не осталось. [...] К чему всё, когда завтра начнутся муки смерти со всею мерзостью подлости, лжи, самообманыванья и кончатся ничтожеством, нулем для себя. (60:357–58).

During Nikolai’s funeral, Tolstoi thinks of writing a “materialistic Gospel” (“Скоро месяц как Николенька умер. ... Во время похорон пришла мне мысль написать материалистическое Евангелие, жизнь Христа-материалиста” (48:30)). The idea of writing a materialistic Gospel echoes his idea to establish a “rational religion” in 1854, but the underlying causes of the two events are significantly different. If the first incident in 1854 only reflects Tolstoi’s ruminations on the practical purposes of religion, the second of 1860 is an acute emotional and spiritual response to the death of a loved one, revealing his despair and spiritual

agony. The tension between Tolstoi's rational religion, rejecting the metaphysical for practical purposes, and his materialistic religion, turning away from the metaphysical in spiritual agony, will eventually give way to a singular moral teaching formulated by Tolstoi in the 1880s— one that preached practicality and eschewed the unseen.

Rediscovering his faith after recovering from the Arzamas crisis, Tolstoi comes to recognize the value of life (though it be finite), which also changes his attitude towards the material world. As Irina Paperno explains, Tolstoi rejects the temporal understanding of life that used to terrify him: now, for him, “[t]he true life is life in the present” (75). In a letter to Strakhov in 1885, Tolstoi argues that Buddhism and Schopenhauer were wrong to consider the created world as merely evil phantasmagoria. He insists that the physical world provides both the material and the tools that man can use to improve its condition: “Материальный мир не есть ни призрак, ни пустяки, ни зло, а это тот материал и те орудия, над которыми и которыми мы призваны работать” (63:314). The body, a part of the material world, acquires the same purpose in Tolstoi's thought, assuming its role as a tool of the spirit: “body and matter [are] the instrument[s] and material for the work of true life” (Spence 93).

Tolstoi's rediscovery of faith and reevaluation of the material world lead him to develop social ideas based on Christian ideals, wherein the body—as a tool of the spiritual/moral self— plays a crucial role. Tolstoi believes that all people should recognize themselves as children of God and, as such, they should be equal and connected to one another in a single community: “Сущность христианского сознания состоит в признании каждым человеком своей сыновности Богу и вытекающего из него единения людей с Богом и между собой, как и сказано в Евангелии (Иоан. XVII, 21)” (“What is Art?” (“Что такое искусство?”)) (1897; 30:157). Tolstoi sees the community of men as an ideal because it corresponds to a harmonious

state of unity or “residency,” which Richard Gustafson describes as “belong[ing] to a world harmonized into accord, made perfect because all participate together in the song of life. The Resident belongs to the family of man and is a son of the Father who loves him” (12). Tolstoi insists that the laws of active love and nonresistance to evil in an individual’s moral conduct should be both a metaphysical principle of man’s unity with God and a practical guide to social action, which, Tolstoi believes, would bring about the Kingdom of God in modern society (Paperno 75–76).

Tolstoi places spirituality not in any metaphysical realm, but in the material world, among the community of men. If, in 1851, Tolstoi associates the spiritual with “fleshlessness” and thus deprives the body of any spiritual value, and in the 1860s–70s denigrates it as something temporary and unstable, doomed to be destroyed, in the 1880s Tolstoi recognizes that the body is not evil, but rather the means that the spirit can use to do its work in the material world. Being a member of the human community, man should renounce his self-interest, love others more than himself, and serve the common good, as Tolstoi argues in his essay “On Life” (“О жизни”) (1887). That is why, when Tolstoi formulates his understanding of the Christian faith, he rejects its mystical (ritualistic and dogmatic) aspect but emphasizes the importance of practical good deeds: “допускаю и уважаю, и понимаю всякое другое толкование всех этих таинственных предметов; но выговариваю одно — только бы люди любили добро, т. е. Бога, и делали бы добро, т. е. Божеские дела. ... [л]юбить Бога и ближнего и делать дела Божьи, т. е. добро ближнему, и делать его точно, по-настоящему, не на словах, а на деле” (63:177). In this sense, he understands spiritual work as incarnate—manifested in practical deeds through which people help one another. In the material world, one must use the body to do a good deed: to carry a heavy load, to work in the field, or to dress a wound. But these good deeds

are not only material but also spiritual, because they correspond to man's spiritual intents: "Разве христианин дает что-нибудь материальное? ... Дело это для искреннего человека всегда будет выражаться в форме материальных дел, но само оно не материально" (1888; 64:167). Tolstoi demands that faith be realized in practical good deeds, and, in this sense, it can be said that he understands faith to be incarnate.

In the 1880s, Tolstoi sees manual work, and thus the body that performs it, as a crucial component of man's moral conduct—both as a son of God among his peers and as a member of the social community. Tolstoi condemns the idleness of some, primarily the gentry, because it brings about the oppression of others. Exploitation and social inequality contradict Tolstoi's vision of society as a group of people who recognize themselves as the children of God. Tolstoi concludes that physical work, done by all people equally without social distinction, is the cure for social injustice. This is moral because it eases the suffering of other people:

Я увидел, что причина страданий и разврата людей та, что одни люди находятся в рабстве у других, и потому я сделал тот простой вывод, что если я хочу помогать людям, то мне прежде всего не нужно делать тех несчастий, которым я хочу помогать, т.е. не участвовать в порабощении людей. ... Я пришел к тому простому и естественному выводу, что если я жалею ту замученную лошадь, на которой я еду, то первое, что я должен сделать, если я точно жалею её, это – слезть с нее и идти своими ногами. ... не иметь денег, т.е. не пользоваться трудами других людей. А чтобы не пользоваться трудами других людей – делать своими руками все, что можем делать. ("What is to be done?"; 25:297–98)

Now, Tolstoi conceptualizes the spiritual/good not as "fleshless," as he did in 1851, but as incarnate, residing in good deeds. The choice between the moral and the immoral lies not in accepting or rejecting the body, but in the way in which the body is used. To be moral, Tolstoi believes, a member of the community should not disdain to satisfy his basic (physical) needs and should contribute his (manual) work to the community. Simple, physical actions that Tolstoi mentions in the above quotation, "идти своими ногами" (to walk on your own legs) and

“делать своими руками все, что можем делать” (to do with your own hands everything that you can do), are crucial for man’s moral conduct: man must do everything that he can by himself, and this “everything,” in Tolstoi’s view, is precisely physical/manual activity.

Tolstoi contrasts manual work to intellectual work. He contends that manual work is an imperative for a community member, whereas intellectual work—such as science and art—is secondary and cannot be a substitute. From a moral standpoint, to carry a heavy load, to work in the field, or to dress somebody’s wound is better than to write a symphony or a book, as he comments in his letter to Romain Rolland in 1887. Physical needs are universal to all people, and thus, if one does the manual work required to satisfy his needs without forcing others to do this work for him, he behaves morally. Tolstoi sees manual work as essential for a community based on moral principles, one that Tolstoi envisions as the ideal (letter to Romain Rolland; 1887; 64:92–93).

Tolstoi’s apparent focus on the body in his discussion of the ideal community is likely to have a Biblical source. In the New Testament, the community of Christians is described as one body:

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. ... Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (1 Cor. 12.12–14, 27).

Tolstoi rejects many Christian dogmas and sacraments, including the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, bread and wine are supposedly transformed into the body and blood of Christ. By eating this bread and drinking this wine, the faithful are united with Christ and, through Him, are also united with each other as a single community. Although Tolstoi rejects the mystical part of the sacrament, he does seem to view the ideal community of men as a single unit/body whose

members/limbs/organs recognize themselves as children of God, or as parts of the whole. In Tolstoi, men are united with each other not through the sacrament of eating and drinking the body of God (which Tolstoi even mocks in the 1900s), but through their practical good deeds—through their own bodies, which they use for the spiritual goal of helping other people as commanded by God. Tolstoi believes that, by using his body to satisfy his needs and the needs of the community, man alleviates exploitation and social inequality, corrects his own morals and the morals of the community, and finally brings society closer to the Christian ideal—a perfect union of people in the Kingdom of God here on earth.

4. The Body between the Carnal and the Spiritual

By the end of his life, Tolstoi does not resolve the conflict between the carnal and the spiritual but reasserts that, though the struggle cannot be won, it nonetheless should be battled. In 1884, Tolstoi concludes that Christians cannot escape the wicked influences and impulses that incite their carnal desires, but that the goal of the true Christian is to keep resisting them. Although the battle cannot be won, each little victory over vice brings him closer to God, which consoles him:

Вся жизнь наша есть труд освобождения себя и других из этого ложного положения. Не надо думать, что христианин может выйти из соблазнов мира и жить вне их. Жизнь христианина есть борьба с соблазнами, освобождение себя и других от них – это труд жизни христианина, и радостный, блаженный труд, если человек поймет, что это его задача жизни. Радостный труд потому, что каждый шаг на этом пути плодотворен, приближает к цели, к царству Божию и к Богу. ... [Т]еперь, когда я вижу, что задача моей жизни в том, чтобы освободиться от соблазнов, я по мере сил своих освобождаюсь от них и, хотя теперь продолжаю жить в соблазнах, я чувствую спокойствие, имею определенную цель в жизни и чувствую радость, оглядываясь назад на то зло, от которого я уже освободился. (63:175)

The body plays a crucial role in Tolstoi's conflict between the carnal and the spiritual. On the one hand, the body incites wicked desires such as lust, indulgence, and idleness, which corrupt

man's morals. On the other hand, the body partakes in man's spiritual life, the only tool of the spirit available in the material world. Early in his career, Tolstoi sees the spiritual as fleshless, but he soon reevaluates his understanding of the spiritual to conclude that it should be incarnate in good deeds, performed through the physical/manual work of the body. Tolstoi thus endows the body with spiritual value. Indeed, the body itself generates carnal desires and challenges man's spiritual aspirations, but it can be made to serve a higher good. Tolstoi condemns that which he considers to be wicked/carnal (sexuality, idleness, exploitation, technological and social progress, the moral ambiguity of the gentry, Christian rituals and dogmas with their earthly metaphysics), but appreciates the spiritual work that man can accomplish in using the body (manual work, serving other people). Tolstoi's solution to the conflict can be summarized thus: in order to be moral, one should battle the carnal and instead incarnate the spiritual into one's moral conduct.

Tolstoi's spiritual quest (and that of some of his characters) is rooted in the conflict between the carnal and the spiritual and thus can be seen as *embodied*. In the following chapters, I will demonstrate how Tolstoi's representation of haptic elements in *Anna Karenina* reflects his controversial views on the body as both a source of wicked desires and a means of spiritual work, and therefore embodies Tolstoi's unresolved conflict between the carnal and the spiritual.

III. THE HAPTIC IN ANNA KARENINA

1. Stiva

During the carriage journey leading to her suicide, Anna has a sudden insight into the nature of her relationship with Vronskii: “Мы именно шли навстречу до связи, а потом неудержимо расходимся в разные стороны” (19:343). Though they are united with one another physically, they have become emotionally and spiritually alienated. Anna’s insight is correct not only about her affair with Vronskii, but also about the nature of carnal love in general in *Anna Karenina*. This chapter considers the haptic experiences of the novel’s sensual characters, Stiva Oblonskii and Anna Karenina, in order to demonstrate how touch, when tarnished by sexual desire, cannot serve as a means of communion. Rather, it severs the characters’ interpersonal and intrapersonal unities: the characters’ emotional and spiritual relatedness to other people and the wholeness of their identities. Sensual touch fragments a person’s connectedness with other people and the wholeness of his own identity.

Tolstoi emphasizes Stiva Oblonskii’s sensual nature by endowing him with a distinctly acute sensory susceptibility. Stiva’s sensory delights lead neither to receiving knowledge about the world nor to resolving philosophical or moral questions. Rather, he derives physical pleasure and emotional satisfaction from his sensory perceptions, which often override his moral sense. Stiva rejoices when he sees a beam of light from behind the curtains as he awakes in the beginning of the novel, despite his ongoing quarrel with his wife (“заметив полосу света, пробившуюся с боку одной из суконных стор, он весело скинул ноги с дивана” 18:4). His red face suggests his enhanced blood circulation and warmth of his body, and the smell of wine

and cigars betrays his indulgence in a carefree lifestyle (“с красным, веселым лицом и запахом вина и сигары” 18:104). During his conversation with Karenin about Anna’s divorce, Stiva aimlessly lingers to smell the leather of his new cigar case (“понюхав кожу, достал папироску” 18:451). “Кожа,” which is both “leather” and “skin” in Russian, reiterates Stiva’s susceptibility to both sensory and carnal pleasures. He even perceives simple mundane objects with sensory acuity uncharacteristic of any other character in the novel: Tolstoi describes Stiva’s handkerchief, with which he wipes his mouth, as having both smell (“fragrant”) and texture (“cambric”) to underscore Stiva’s sensuous engagement with reality (“обтирая душистым батистовым с каемками платком рот” 19:226).

Perhaps the most pronounced manifestation of Stiva’s sensory hedonism is the depiction of his oyster feast at the restaurant where he dines with Levin, where visual and tactile details suggest his gustatory delight: he eats *sloshy* (“шлюпающие”) oysters from their *pearly* shells with a *silver* fork. Tolstoi almost never refers to gustatory sensations, so the indirect visual and tactile descriptions of Stiva’s exquisite dinner are as close as he comes to describing taste. However, visual and tactile details depicting Stiva’s food also serve another purpose. These references suggest the pleasure that Stiva derives not only from devouring his food, but also from the aesthetic qualities accompanying the eating process: seeing the food and probing its texture. Even Stiva’s *moist* and *shiny* eyes seem to resemble the oysters’ texture, conveying Stiva’s sensory enchantment with his food: “— А недурны, — говорил он, сдирая серебряною вилочкой с перламутровой раковины шлюпающих устриц и проглатывая их одну за другой. — Недурны, — повторял он, вскидывая влажные и блестящие глаза то на Левина, то на Татарина” (18:39).

Stiva's delight in the sensuous qualities of his surroundings reflects his sensual nature, which, however indulgent, never becomes as ruinous as Anna's. Stiva's sensory impressions are usually pleasurable—unlike Anna's, which are similarly heightened, but to such a degree that they cause her physical pain. For example, shortly before her suicide, when Anna pursues Vronskii at the train station, the noise of the trains and the voices of the people around her physically hurt her, making her want to close her ears. Neither can she stand the smell of food, which disgusts her and diverts her from eating. Anna's heightened sensitivity to sensory impressions causes her to experience reality as something that assaults her, reflecting her increasing alienation. Although Anna's perception is affected by opium, which she begins to take after giving birth to her daughter, there is the suggestion that her distorted perception is also a result of her evolved sexuality. Stiva's sensory susceptibility suggests his immersion in reality, his indulgence in the quotidian of life, whereas Anna's heightened sensory sensitivity reflects her alienation from reality and anticipates her suicide.

Stiva's sensory perception is indulgent and thus impulsive, reflecting his spontaneous, easily-carried-away nature (“способность всё, всё забыть ... способность полного увлечения” 18:75), jeopardizing his moral sense. Tolstoi uses another sensory metaphor to exemplify Stiva's impulsive nature. During this same oyster dinner, Stiva admits that if the smell of a sweet roll is so attractive that he cannot resist it, he is ready to steal the roll even though he already has one. Smell symbolizes Stiva's attraction to and anticipation of pleasure, which Stiva, because of his indulgent nature, cannot resist. He responds readily to the stimuli that promise him physical pleasure, easily justifying his infidelities with the satisfaction they provide. The carnal overrides the moral in Stiva's ethics; thus, he believes that one should at least enjoy sensual pleasures in spite of moral failings:

Глаза Степана Аркадьича блестели больше обыкновенного.

— Отчего же? Калач иногда так пахнет, что не удержишься.

Himmlisch ist's, wenn ich bezwungen

Meine irdische Begier;

Aber noch wenn's nicht gelungen,

Hatt'ich auch recht hübsch Plaisir!¹⁰ (18:45)

The Western philosophical tradition (Plato, Aristotle, and Descartes) associates vision with mind/reason and clarity of perception and judgment. Tolstoi shows that Stiva's mind/reason and therefore moral judgment are compromised by his indulgent nature. Stiva's sight lags behind his touch. Waking up in his office after a quarrel with his wife, who has exiled him from the bedroom, Stiva fails to recognize that he has woken up in the wrong room, or to recall the upsetting dispute, even after he opens his eyes. He notices the bright light from behind the curtains, and one can assume that he should have noticed the room's furniture and understood that he is not in the bedroom but in the office. However, Stiva only realizes that the room is wrong, recalling his quarrel with Dolly, when he stretches out his arm to fetch his robe and does not find it in its usual place (once again, in relation not to the room but to his body):

... вдруг вскочил, сел на диван и открыл глаза. ... Глаза Степана Аркадьича весело заблестели, и он задумался улыбаясь. ... И, заметив полосу света, пробившуюся с боку одной из суконных стор, он весело скинул ноги с дивана, отыскал ими шитые женой (подарок ко дню рождения в прошлом году), обделанные в золотистый сафьян туфли и по старой, девятилетней привычке, не вставая, потянулся рукой к тому месту, где в спальне у него висел халат. И тут он вспомнил вдруг, как и почему он спит не в спальне жены, а в кабинете; улыбка исчезла с его лица, он сморщил лоб. (18:4)

Indeed, Stiva is driven by his body rather than by his mind/reason, which reflects his general insusceptibility to others' feelings and thus testifies to his poor moral judgment. When his wife

¹⁰ Великолепно, если я поборол
Свою земную страсть,
Но если это и не удалось,
Я всё же испытал блаженство! (18:45)

discovers his liaison, he does not recognize his guilt and feels no remorse, involuntarily smiling at her with his habitually kind and silly smile, causing Dolly even greater distress:

Вместо того чтоб оскорбиться, отречься, оправдываться, просить прощения, оставаться даже равнодушным — все было бы лучше того, что он сделал! — его лицо совершенно невольно («рефлексы головного мозга», подумал Степан Аркадьич, который любил физиологию), совершенно невольно вдруг улыбнулось привычною, доброю и потому глупую улыбкой. ... «Всею виной эта глупая улыбка», думал Степан Аркадьич (18:4–5).

Tolstoi repeats “совершенно невольно” (absolutely involuntarily) twice in the same sentence to describe Stiva’s smile, emphasizing his lack of control over the nerves and muscles that shape his expression. Stiva’s poor moral sense does nothing to restrain his bodily impulses, revealing his indulgent and impulsive nature, and a lack of control over his own body. Likewise, his pleasant morning routine and good digestion easily erase the memory of his ongoing quarrel with his wife, causing him to smile happily (“радостно улыбнулся, не оттого, чтоб у него на душе было что-нибудь особенно приятное, — радостную улыбку вызвало хорошее пищеварение” 18:10). Stiva’s smile is a primitive, physiological reaction invoked by healthy bodily operations, easily overriding any nascent remorse.

Stiva’s judgments about religion and spirituality also derive from his body rather than his mind/reason, and therefore are base. Because Stiva’s body is sensual and indulgent, spiritual aspirations requiring him to restrain his carnal desires are alien to him. Supernatural and moral questions, at least in the way that they are posed by religion, lie outside of Stiva’s interests. He is immersed in the earthly, carnal life, which he is not ready to give up. He rejects religion because religious services cause him physical discomfort—a pain in his legs: “Степан Аркадьич не мог вынести без боли в ногах даже короткого молебна и не мог понять, к чему все эти страшные и высокопарные слова о том свете, когда и на этом жить было бы очень весело” (18:9). Nonetheless, given Tolstoi’s reservations about the dogmatic and metaphysical aspects of

the Christian religion, Stiva's ignorance of immaterial spiritual realities may reflect, in some ways, his virtue. Stiva has fathered seven children with Dolly over nine years, and at least one additional child with his mistress, the French governess. Stiva's carnality reflects not only his sensuality but also his naturally procreative force, incompatible with strict Christian asceticism but consistent with Tolstoi's relatively positive views on sex and procreation during the 1870s, when he considered procreation to be a duty commanded by God, as I discuss in Chapter 1. The ambiguity of Stiva's carnality reflects the ambiguity of the character's moral sense. Although his sense of responsibility is admittedly questionable, it is not entirely absent. During a conversation about carnal love with Levin over their oyster dinner, Stiva says that, once having seduced a woman, he will not leave his family for her, but will not leave her either: "Ты пойми, что женщина, милое, кроткое, любящее существо, бедная, одинокая и всем пожертвовала. Теперь, когда уже дело сделано, — ты пойми, — неужели бросить ее? Положим: расстаться, чтобы не разрушить семейную жизнь; но неужели не пожалеть ее, не устроить, не смягчить?" (18:45). Stiva's morality is inherently corrupt, since the affair is the result of his inability to resist desire in the first place. Yet, his sense of responsibility for the seduced woman is, in a way, moral. Stiva's indulgent, sensuous and thus self-forgiving nature also makes him more compassionate with respect to others' moral failings. For instance, Levin, whose lifestyle included some dissolute instances in the past, condemns fallen women, calling them "vermin" and comparing them to "spiders" (18:45). On the other hand, Stiva's ambiguous, self-forgiving morality makes him a more empathetic person, allowing him to sympathize with Anna and stand by her side after she yields to Vronskii's courtship and becomes a fallen woman herself. The balance between the carnal and the moral is not perfected in Stiva's nature, so his sensuality dominates his conduct and often overrides his moral sense. Nonetheless, this moral sense, albeit

rudimentary, is still present in his nature, even if it derives from moral weakness rather than from moral strength. It makes him more tolerant and kind, even if his tolerance for his own moral flaws harms other people (both family members and lovers).

Stiva's haptic perceptions physically manifest his ability to empathize and feel remorse (though rudimentary). Despite seeking pleasant sensations and avoiding unpleasant ones, Stiva is nevertheless capable of responding to unpleasant stimuli that cause him physical and emotional discomfort. When Stiva's daughter Tania realizes that he is lying to her, by claiming that her mother is not upset, she blushes out of shame for him, and Stiva reciprocates with his own blush (18:10). Tania's reproach for the lie makes him feel embarrassed, although he never fully recognizes his unfaithfulness as a moral flaw. Stiva's blush *is* a physiological bodily reaction, just like his involuntary smile, or the good mood incited by a sunny day and good digestion. But in the case of Tania, he responds to an impulse that is neither pleasurable nor, strictly speaking, physiological in nature. Stiva responds to a moral rather than physiological stimulus, even though it is manifested through the body. Tania's moral sense manifests itself in her blush, and thus appeals to Stiva's moral sense, causing him to blush as well. Stiva's and Tania's shared sensations reflect their shared emotions, testifying to Stiva's susceptibility to shame.

Stiva also sympathizes with Dolly, though his compassion is but momentary. Seeing Dolly's pained expression and hearing her desperate voice, he begins to suffer himself, not only emotionally but physically: he cannot breathe, as if Dolly's tears are transported into his body and block his airways ("ему захватило дыхание, что-то подступило к горлу"). Dolly's suffering, concentrated in her voice, seems to render him speechless ("он не мог продолжать, рыдание остановилось у него в горле"):

... когда он увидел ее измученное, страдальческое лицо, услышал этот звук голоса, покорный судьбе и отчаянный, ему захватило дыхание, что-то подступило к горлу, и глаза его заблестели слезами.

— Боже мой, что я сделал! Долли! Ради Бога!.. Ведь...— он не мог продолжать, рыдание остановилось у него в горле. (18:13)

Stiva's suffering, like all of his sensory experiences, is acute in this scene, but he once again behaves impulsively. He responds only to direct stimulus: he feels compassion for Dolly only when witnessing her suffering in the moment, and restores his good spirits as soon as Dolly leaves his sight. Stiva jokes inwardly about feeling like a guilty little boy only half an hour later, underscoring his impulsive and indulgent nature, which seeks pleasurable experiences and avoids unpleasant ones, and revealing his immature moral sense (“«Если б они знали ... каким виноватым мальчиком полчаса тому назад был их председатель!» — И глаза его смеялись при чтении доклада” 18:18). However, in spite of Stiva's generally questionable morality, he is not devoid of empathy. Stiva's ability to feel ashamed and partake in others' suffering (even that which he causes) underscores his nascent—though yet undeveloped—moral sense.

Compared to the pangs of remorse derived from Stiva's interactions with other people as he is affected by their reproach, his self- and body-centered conscience, flawed as it is, is paradoxically more durable and effective. Although Stiva is a fundamentally carnal person, acting impulsively on his “brain reflexes” and driven by his body's needs and comforts, his body is the seat not only of carnal desire but also of moral sense (even if primitive and rooted in his personal comfort). The rudimentary moral sense embedded in his body prevents him from complete, carefree neglect, prompting him with physical and emotional discomfort (though not moral guilt) to seek his wife's forgiveness.

Being a man of habit and comfort, Stiva feels uneasy when his routine is disturbed. His body suddenly reminds him of his fight with Dolly, interrupting his sensory (haptic, visual, and

gustatory) enjoyment. Despite being indulgent, easily carried away, and forgetful, Stiva cannot entirely escape his marital dispute. Stiva's involuntary smile, which he justifies as one of his "рефлексы головного мозга/brain reflexes," but still blames for aggravating his conflict with Dolly, continues to cause him discomfort. Stiva's pleasant morning routine (reading a newspaper, drinking coffee, and eating a roll) seems to have completely wiped his memory of the ongoing quarrel. However, precisely when Stiva smiles, delighting in his good digestion, the expression—again, involuntarily—brings back the recollection of the unpleasant incident and frustrates his cheerful mood ("радостную улыбку вызвало хорошее пищеварение. Но эта радостная улыбка сейчас же напомнила ему всё, и он задумался" (18:10)). Although Stiva tries to erase his sense of guilt, his smile keeps a record of the misdeed. Stiva's involuntary grin, which particularly vexes him as a cause of his alienation from Dolly, haunts him through subsequent smiles, suggesting his moral sense. That Stiva's smile triggers the recollection of his misdeed reveals the balance between the carnal and the spiritual within his personality: although his carnal nature dominates, his spiritual—and thus moral—nature is still present.

Nonetheless, although morality is present in Stiva, his carnal, sensual nature typically dominates his conduct. As discussed above, Tolstoi suggests that Stiva's sensuality, which makes him highly susceptible to sensory impressions of worldly phenomena, also makes him impulsive and indulgent, unable to control his feelings and desires, and as such, often renders him selfish and insensitive to others' needs. Because of his impulsive and indulgent nature, Stiva fails to sustain the wholeness of his family, which is reflected not only in the famous disorder in the Oblonskii house in the beginning of the novel, caused by Stiva's exposed infidelity, but also in Stiva's haptic interactions with his family members: his children and Dolly.

Although Stiva tries to love each of his children equally, his love is selective, and he can neither control his feelings nor even correct his conduct. Stiva has tender, loving relations with his daughter Tania, whereas his relations with his son Grisha, whom he loves less, are more distant. Describing Stiva's relations with Tania and Grisha, Tolstoi juxtaposes touch and vision as proximate and distant senses, respectively. Touch and vision are polyvalent phenomena in the novel, and their interpretation depends on the particular relationship that they describe. A parent and child are tied together through their bodies, and their love is profoundly corporeal, but also innocent. Therefore, in parental-filial relationships, touch, as the most earthbound and intimate of the senses, communicates a physical and emotional bond between parent and child, whereas vision, the most incorporeal and detached sense, suggests their alienation. Tolstoi chooses touch to emphasize the emotional connection between Stiva and his daughter, and vision to communicate the emotional alienation between Stiva and his son. Stiva caresses Tania's smooth, tender neck, yet only smiles at Grisha from a distance, without touching him. Stiva's children reciprocate in the same manner: Tania greets her father with a touch, hanging on his neck, whereas his son ignores his smile because it is cold and unaffectionate, maintaining the distance between them:

Девочка, любимица отца, вбежала смело, обняла его и смеясь повисла у него на шее, как всегда, радуясь на знакомый запах духов, распространившийся от его бакенбард. Поцеловав его наконец в покрасневшее от наклоненного положения и сияющее нежностью лицо, девочка разняла руки и хотела бежать назад; но отец удержал ее. — Что мама? — спросил он, водя рукой по гладкой, нежной шейке дочери. — Здравствуй, — сказал он, улыбаясь здоровавшемуся мальчику. Он сознавал, что меньше любил мальчика, и всегда старался быть ровен; но мальчик чувствовал это и не ответил улыбкой на холодную улыбку отца (18:11).

Later in the scene, Stiva again strokes Tania's "tender" hand and "tender" shoulder, kisses her hair and neck, but continues to ignore his son. The emotional reciprocity between Stiva and his daughter is reflected in the reciprocity not only of their gestures but also of their sensations.

When Tania embraces Stiva and hangs on his neck, she can smell the familiar perfume of his sideburns. Likewise, when Stiva caresses her neck, Tolstoi describes it as “smooth and tender,” suggesting Stiva’s sensory impression as he touches Tania’s skin. In keeping with Merleau-Ponty’s vision of unity as simultaneously touching and being touched, Stiva’s and Tania’s sensory interactions—touching the other while simultaneously being touched by him/her—reveal their profound connection. Their tactile interaction conflates active and passive touches: reaching out to the other’s body, they are being simultaneously touched by it. The sensations produced by the contact or close proximity with the other’s body (tenderness of skin, smell of the sideburns) reveal Stiva and Tania’s mutual affection. In light of Merleau-Ponty’s theory of sensory reciprocity in his essay “The Intertwining—The Chiasm” (*The Visible and the Invisible*), Stiva and Tania achieve unity, because each of them not only touches the other but is also simultaneously touched—Stiva is touched through the sensation of Tania’s skin, and Tania is touched by Stiva’s smell.

The thermal sensations suggested in the scene also contrast Stiva’s unequal loves for Tania and Grisha. As he bends over to let his daughter kiss him, his face becomes red as the blood rushes to his skin. His flush suggests the warmth of his skin/body, and reflects the tender and cordial love he feels for his daughter. On the other hand, Stiva’s insincere smile for his son is “cold.” Although in this case the “cold” does not denote a physical sensation, but rather an emotional state of alienation, it could be read as a haptic element as well. After all, Grisha does not touch his father and cannot feel the warmth of his body, as Tania most likely does when touching Stiva’s neck. Stiva’s love for his children is tender but not inclusive: his insufficient love for his son leaves Grisha feeling alienated.

Stiva lacks control over his loves (both sensual and parental) and needs a mediator who can maintain his family's unity, such as Tania in this episode (and Anna later on). When Stiva gives Tania two of her favorite candies, Tania gives one to Grisha, whom Stiva continuously neglects. Tania mediates Stiva's touch and love for Grisha, bridging the gap between father and son.

— Ну, иди, Танчурочка моя. Ах да, постой, — сказал он, всё-таки удерживая ее и глядя ее нежную ручку.

Он достал с камина, где вчера поставил, коробочку конфет и дал ей две, выбрав ее любимые, шоколадную и помадную.

— Грише? — сказала девочка, указывая на шоколадную.

— Да, да. — И еще раз погладив ее плечико, он поцеловал ее в корни волос и шею и отпустил ее. (18:11)

Despite her enjoyment of touch, which could indicate her nascent sensuality (she is Stiva's daughter, after all), little Tania serves as a bridge between her parents and Grisha, giving him candies in this scene, and a cake later in the novel, when Dolly punishes him for misbehavior. Tania's still-dormant sensuality does not prevent her from connecting with other people or re-connecting people with one another. Tania's sensuality manifests itself as a tender, filial, and sisterly love, devoid of the ruinous erotic component developed in Stiva. Inherently innocent, Tania proves a successful peacemaker, able to re-unite. Even if the unity she facilitates does not prove stable, it is no fault of the peacemaker, but of the participants: Stiva's indulgent nature and his flawed morality continue to threaten the family peace.

Through their touch, Tolstoi also reveals Stiva and Dolly's typical alienation, which only escalates after Dolly uncovers Stiva's infidelity. Stiva's love for his wife is flawed. He does not love Dolly with a romantic or spiritual love, which should have prevented him from cheating, but rather only respects her ("Жена стареется, а ты полн жизни. Ты не успеешь оглянуться, как ты уже чувствуешь, что ты не можешь любить любовью жену, как бы ты ни уважал ее")

18:45). Even this respect for Dolly is questionable. Stiva seems to respect his wife as a friend rather than a spouse, since he does not find his infidelity offensive. Although Stiva's respect for Dolly (however questionable) and Dolly's love for Stiva tie them together, their union is imperfect and verges on separation. On the fateful evening when Dolly discovers Stiva's unfaithfulness, Stiva returns from a party with a pear for Dolly in his hand, only to find Dolly holding a note revealing his love affair:

Неприятнее всего была та первая минута, когда он, вернувшись из театра, веселый и довольный, с огромною грушей для жены в руке, не нашел жены в гостиной; к удивлению, не нашел ее и в кабинете и наконец увидал ее в спальне с несчастною, открывшею всё, запиской в руке. Она, эта вечно озабоченная, и хлопотливая, и недалекая, какою он считал ее, Долли, неподвижно сидела с запиской в руке и с выражением ужаса, отчаяния и гнева смотрела на него. (18:3)

Tolstoi communicates Stiva and Dolly's relationship non-verbally by drawing the reader's attention to their hands. Tolstoi repeats "в руке" twice in the episode: when Stiva brings the pear to Dolly "in his hand," she holds the note revealing his infidelity "in her hand." Their hands cannot touch one another because of the objects they are holding. The pear, which Stiva brings from a party to his home, bridges the gap between his lascivious lifestyle and his family life. Despite multiple romances and even his current lover's pregnancy (suggested in the text), Stiva does not want to leave his family. Stiva's gift of a pear for his wife emblemizes their connection. Even though Stiva is not attracted to his wife anymore, he brings her a pear as a present. Presumably, Dolly would have accepted the pear from Stiva's hands if she had not found the fateful note. Stiva's offering suggests that they do not share a profound emotional or spiritual connection (they do not touch each other directly, but through a gift, in this case the pear), but that they are nonetheless linked. Both love their children (even though Stiva's parental love is selective and unequal) and want to preserve their family. When his unfaithfulness is revealed, Stiva strives to make peace with Dolly and hopes for her forgiveness, although he

never recognizes his guilt and does not stop cheating. Stiva will not change his lifestyle, but he wants to restore his and his family's habitual routines, which include their family unity (albeit generally unstable, because of his infidelities).

Stiva's discovered unfaithfulness severs the connection, however faint, between himself and Dolly, dividing his family just as the love note divides Stiva and Dolly's hands and hampers their touch. By counterposing the "pear" in Stiva's hand with the "note" in Dolly's, Tolstoi contrasts Stiva's and Dolly's attitudes toward infidelity, suggesting the opposing moral beliefs which alienate them. Dolly, who married Stiva believing in his innocence, and who did not know about his romances after their marriage, is shocked, aggrieved and enraged by his infidelity. On the other hand, Stiva takes his romances lightheartedly. His moral judgment is driven by his body's desires, and he finds it easy to justify his infidelity with his sensual drive, which he cannot satisfy within family bounds. He displaces his responsibility by saying—and believing—that he is to be blamed, but that he is not guilty ("виной я, а не виноват" 18:4). Stiva recognizes that he is at the center of his family's discord, but not that he is the cause. He considers his unfaithfulness to be natural (and therefore permissive) because, still a young man at the age of thirty-two, he finds his wife, who has given birth to their five living and two dead children, unattractive. He considers himself a victim rather than an offender, failing to recognize his responsibility for the conflict. Stiva's lighthearted attitude and Dolly's condemnation alienate them, like the pear in Stiva's hand and the note in Dolly's. Stiva's infidelity, and Dolly's pain and condemnation, divide them, severing the connections between all other family members and throwing the entire household into disorder.

Tolstoi shows that Stiva's touch, tarnished with sensuality, cannot be a means of communion, so Stiva cannot bridge the rift he has created by himself. As his daughter Tania

reconnects Stiva and Grisha, Stiva's sister Anna comes to bridge the gap between Stiva and Dolly, reconnecting them and restoring the unity of their family. In reuniting Stiva's family, Anna also interlinks its members through her touch, consecutively touching Stiva, then Dolly, and then their children, "stitching" them back together.

Arriving at Stiva's house, Anna finds Dolly stricken by grief and seized with hatred. Dolly is hurt by Stiva's infidelity, feeling alienated and estranged ("чужие") from him: "мы чужие. Навсегда чужие! — повторила она опять с особенным значением это страшное для нее слово" (18:16). Her suffering transforms her love into hatred, alienating her also from her children. She refers to her and Stiva's children as only "his," separating herself from them, blaming them for stealing her youthful beauty and questioning if she should have had children at all:

Ты понимаешь ли, Анна, что у меня моя молодость, красота взяты кем? Им и его детьми. Я отслужила ему, и на этой службе ушло всё мое, и ему теперь, разумеется, свежее пошлое существо приятнее. Они, верно, говорили между собою обо мне или, еще хуже, умалчивали, — ты понимаешь? — Опять ненавистью зажглись ее глаза. — И после этого он будет говорить мне... Что ж, я буду верить ему? Никогда. Нет, уж кончено всё, всё, что составляло утешенье, награду труда, мук... Ты поверишь ли? я сейчас учила Гришу: прежде это бывало радость, теперь мученье. Зачем я стараюсь, тружусь? Зачем дети? (18:74–75).

Dolly's hatred and alienation distort her judgment (she sees the situation "in a wrong way" ("видишь не так"), as Anna says), giving her the desire to kill Stiva and perhaps herself as well:

Ужасно то, что вдруг душа моя перевернулась, и вместо любви, нежности у меня к нему одна злоба, да, злоба. Я бы убила его и...

— Душенька, Долли, я понимаю, но не мучь себя. Ты так оскорблена, так возбуждена, что ты многое видишь не так. (18:74–75)

Dolly's initial impulse is to reject Anna along with the others. Dolly is humiliated, afraid that Anna, Stiva's sister and emissary, will naturally take his side and will be unable to empathize:

"Говорить о своем горе она не хотела, а с этим горем на душе говорить о постороннем она

не могла. Она знала, что, так или иначе, она Анне выскажет всё, и то ее радовала мысль о том, как она выскажет, то злила необходимость говорить о своем унижении с ней, его сестрой, и слышать от нее готовые фразы увещания и утешения” (18:72). Because Dolly does not trust Anna, she hugs and kisses (touches) Anna insincerely, only as a social ritual of greeting. When Anna comes in, Dolly is trying to decide whether to share her feelings with Anna or to reject her, and she looks puzzled rather than joyful when they meet. Dolly’s puzzlement (“удивление”) reflects not only the surprise of seeing Anna so early, but also the uncertainty of how Anna should be perceived. So, Dolly’s touch and kiss reveal her emotional detachment: “Услыхав шум платья и легких шагов уже в дверях, она оглянулась, и на измученном лице ее невольно выразилось не радость, а удивление. Она встала и обняла золовку. — Как, уж приехала? — сказала она, целуя ее” (18:72).

Anna begins her peacemaking mission by touching Dolly indirectly, using her children as intermediaries. Anna and Dolly are both mothers and thus have grounds for bonding, so Anna begins to earn Dolly’s trust through her children. Anna kisses Grisha, and then holds and kisses Tania, and finally asks Dolly to show her *all* of the other children:

— Это Гриша? Боже мой, как он вырос! — сказала Анна и, поцеловав его, не спуская глаз с Долли, остановилась и покраснела. — Нет, позволь никуда не ходить. [...]

— Боже мой, Таня! Ровесница Сереже моему, — прибавила она, обращаясь ко вбежавшей девочке. Она взяла ее на руки и поцеловала. — Прелестная девочка, прелесть! Покажи же мне всех. (18:72)

Anna’s first step in helping Dolly overcome her alienation and bridge the gap between her and Stiva proves successful. When Anna sits closer to Dolly, taking her hand and trying to console her, Dolly accepts her touch: she does not yet respond to the touch, or loosen her reserved expression, but neither does she withdraw her hand and move away: “— Долли, милая! — сказала она, — я не хочу ни говорить тебе за него, ни утешать; это нельзя. Но, душенька,

мне просто жалко, жалко тебя всею душой! ... Она пересела ближе к невестке и взяла ее руку своею энергическою маленькою рукой. Долли не отстранилась, но лицо ее не изменяло своего сухого выражения” (18:73). Dolly’s acceptance of Anna’s touch reveals that she is overcoming her alienation. Even though Dolly still feels withdrawn, thinking that she has lost everything and thus cannot be consoled, she begins to confess her grief. Anna’s compassion, expressed in her touch on Dolly’s hand, bridges the gap between them:

— ... Утешить меня нельзя. Всё потеряно после того, что было, всё пропало!
И как только она сказала это, выражение лица ее вдруг смягчилось. (18:73)

Dolly’s confession brings her relief, and her face suddenly softens. Dolly does not yet respond to Anna’s touch with her own, but her facial expression suggests that Dolly is ready to let Anna into her emotional world and re-connect.

Throughout their conversation, Dolly tries to object to Anna’s reasoning, becoming more distant: she doubts that Anna can fully understand her situation and suffering, and feels that she cannot forgive Stiva despite her love for him. Dolly’s vicious cycle of recurring fits of suffering, frustration, and hostility perpetuate her alienation (“как будто нарочно, каждый раз, как она смягчалась, она начинала опять говорить о том, что раздражало ее” (18:74)). Anna’s touch breaks this cycle and helps Dolly overcome her sense of alienation. Whenever Dolly drifts away, seized by grief and anger, Anna touches (presses and kisses) Dolly’s hand, reaching out to Dolly and reasserting their bond:

Продолжать быть моим мужем вместе с нею... это ужасно! Ты не можешь понять [...]

— О, нет, я понимаю! Понимаю, милая Долли, понимаю, — говорила Анна, пожимая ее руку. (18:74)

... Но, Долли, душенька, я понимаю твои страдания вполне, только одного я не знаю: я не знаю... я не знаю, насколько в душе твоей есть еще любви к нему. Это ты знаешь, — настолько ли есть, чтобы можно было простить. Если есть, то прости!

— Нет, — начала Долли; но Анна прервала ее, целуя еще раз ее руку. (18:75)

Finally, when Dolly decides to forgive Stiva, she begins to reciprocate Anna's touch for the first time. Dolly hugs Anna sincerely, greeting her at last as if she had just arrived, and this time with genuine joy: "Если простить, то совсем, совсем. Ну, пойдем, я тебя проведу в твою комнату, — сказала она [Долли] вставая, и по дороге Долли обняла Анну. — Милая моя, как я рада, что ты приехала" (18:75). Dolly's response to Anna's touches, in the form of sincere and joyful embrace, reflects her reintegration.

Having helped Dolly overcome her resentment and alienation, Anna now finalizes her mission as a peacemaker by touching Stiva. Anna crosses Stiva shortly before Stiva and Dolly's fateful reconciliation. The sign of crossing can involve a direct touch on the skin, or can be performed without, but in either case the touch is implied. Throughout the scene, Anna touches the Oblonskiis' children, Dolly, and Stiva once more, as she works to reestablish peace between them, restoring their unity. She now closes up a different kind of circle: not the vicious circle of individual hostility and alienation, but a circle interlinking the family members into a single whole.

The dynamics of Stiva and Dolly's fight and reconciliation are reflected in their children, especially Grisha, who has been neglected or nearly neglected by both of his parents on different occasions. Before Anna's arrival, the children run around the house as if lost, without proper guidance or order ("Дети бегали по всему дому, как потерянные" (18:3)). Stiva is always more affectionate with his daughter, Tania, than he is with Grisha. Dolly, too, seized with anger, feels alienated from her children, and singles out Grisha in particular ("я сейчас учила Гришу: прежде это бывало радость, теперь мученье. Зачем я стараюсь, тружусь? Зачем дети?" 18:74). After Anna successfully accomplishes her mission as a peacemaker, all of the children gather together around Anna, playing a game which is stunningly tactile, and whose rules are to

sit as close to her as possible, touch her, hold her hand, kiss her, play with a ring on her finger, or at least touch the flounce of her dress. By Anna's side, Grisha finally gains the affection and touch that is lacking in his relationship with his father and (almost) with his mother. Grisha beams with pride and delight as he puts his head under Anna's hand, pressing against her dress:

Когда Степан Аркадьич ушел, она вернулась на диван, где сидела окруженная детьми. Оттого ли, что дети видели, что мама любила эту тетю, или оттого, что они сами чувствовали в ней особенную прелесть; но старшие два, а за ними и меньшие, как это часто бывает с детьми, еще до обеда прилипли к новой тете и не отходили от нее. И между ними составилось что-то в роде игры, состоящей в том, чтобы как можно ближе сидеть подле тети, дотрагиваться до нее, держать ее маленькую руку, целовать ее, играть с ее кольцом или хоть дотрагиваться до оборки ее платья.

— Ну, ну, как мы прежде сидели, — сказала Анна Аркадьевна, садясь на свое место.

И опять Гриша подсунул голову под ее руку и прислонился головой к ее платью и засиял гордостью и счастьем. [...]

— Нет, я прежде! нет, я! — кричали дети, окончив чай и выбегая к тете Анне.

— Все вместе! — сказала Анна и смеясь побежала им на встречу и обняла и повалила всю эту кучу копошащихся и визжащих от восторга детей. (18:77–79)

The scene ends with Anna's exclamation "Все вместе! / All together!" as she embraces all of the children, stressing—as the exclamation point confirms—their unity. The image of the children united around Anna, seeking to touch and be touched, including the now-integrated Grisha, reflects Stiva and Dolly's reconciliation taking place in the adjacent room.

Through Anna's touch, Stiva, Dolly, and their children all come together as one family. Touching Stiva, Dolly, and their children, Anna stitches their family back together. Even though Stiva and Dolly will never have a perfectly spiritual union, because of Stiva's continuing infidelity, Stiva's sense of guilt (albeit transient) and Dolly's continuing forgiveness allow their family to recover a relative wholeness.

By depicting Stiva's haptic interactions with his children and his wife, Tolstoi shows that Stiva's carnal, indulgent, and impulsive nature weakens his ability to establish and sustain his family's unity. Stiva's touch fails to fulfill what should be its major purpose—to serve as a link

interconnecting his family members into a single whole. Stiva's lack of parental love for his son Grisha, and his lack of either romantic attraction or spiritual love for his wife Dolly, renders his touch indirect, communicated only through an intermediary (object or person). This inability reveals his alienation. By introducing intermediaries into Stiva's relationships, Tolstoi demonstrates that Stiva fails to bridge the gap between himself and others, pointing to the fragmenting rather than uniting nature of touch tarnished by his sensuality.

2. Dolly

Unlike other major characters, Dolly's haptic experiences are few. Nevertheless, the limited haptic experiences that she does have indicate that she is one of the characters (along with Levin and Kitty) who embody Tolstoi's moral ideal. Dolly's haptic experiences manifest themselves in three episodes. The first instance is the above analyzed pear-note episode, in which Stiva and Dolly's hands cannot not touch. The pear in Stiva's hand is associated with his lascivious lifestyle. This, combined with the note revealing his unfaithfulness held in Dolly's hand (telling of her moral condemnation of Stiva's conduct), prevents their hands from touching. The second instance is an episode that I will analyze in the Chapter on Anna, when Anna arrives from Saint Petersburg to persuade Dolly to forgive Stiva. The episode is, however, telling of Anna's rather than of Dolly's haptic experiences. The third episode is the one that will be my focus in this chapter, since it reveals the way in which Tolstoi identifies Dolly as a moral ideal through her haptic perception.

On her way to visit Anna, who now lives with Vronskii at his estate, Dolly compares her own troubled life devoted to her children to Anna's—who, as Dolly imagines, enjoys freedom, physical beauty, and passion with Vronskii. Recalling the hardships of motherhood, Dolly thinks of the painful sensation in her cracked nipples when breastfeeding (“Дарья Александровна

вздрагнула от одного воспоминания о боли треснувших сосков, которую она испытывала почти с каждым ребенком” [19:181]). While Stiva’s awareness of his body is associated with sensuality (as Anna’s is associated with hers, as will be discussed later), Dolly’s awareness of her body is linked to motherhood. Since Dolly experiences no other bodily sensations in the novel, it is safe to suggest that the pain in her nipples reflects her identity—that is, the identity of a mother.

It is true that Dolly temporarily feels conflicted about the way in which she has lived her life—devoting it solely to bearing and raising her children. She regrets her lost beauty and the nonchalant lifestyle she could have had without incessant concern for her children’s wellbeing. She even wonders if she was right to let Anna persuade her to stay with Stiva, and meditates on whether she should have left Stiva and enjoyed free love in the same way that Anna did: “Я тогда должна была бросить мужа и начать жизнь с начала. Я бы могла любить и быть любима по-настоящему. А теперь разве лучше? Я не уважаю его. Он мне нужен, — думала она про мужа, — и я терплю его. Разве это лучше? Я тогда еще могла нравиться, у меня оставалась моя красота” (19:182).

Dolly temporarily associates the pain in her cracked nipples, and therefore her motherhood, solely with hardships. She also reflects on the unnecessary sacrifice—as she is tempted to admit—of her beauty and joy to her husband, who does not love her, and to her children, who misbehave and may, she is afraid, grow up to be poorly mannered despite her strenuous efforts (“Так что и вывести детей я не могу сама, а разве с помощью других, с унижением. Ну, да если предположим самое счастливое: дети не будут больше умирать, и я кое-как воспитаю их. В самом лучшем случае они только не будут негодяи. Вот всё, чего

я могу желать. Из-за всего этого сколько мучений, трудов... Загублена вся жизнь!»
[19:182]).

Tolstoi associates Dolly's doubts in the value of motherhood and her envy for Anna's free lifestyle with an autoerotic impulse. Dolly is tempted to look at herself in a little mirror that she keeps in her bag to check her looks (wondering if she *still* can be found attractive). Although she then decides not to, feeling ashamed of what the coachman and the clerk may think of her, she continues to daydream of possible romances:

«... Я тогда еще могла нравиться, у меня оставалась моя красота», продолжала думать Дарья Александровна, и ей хотелось посмотреться в зеркало. У ней было дорожное зеркальце в мешочке, и ей хотелось достать его; но, посмотрев на спины кучера и покачивавшегося конторщика, она почувствовала, что ей будет совестно, если кто-нибудь из них оглянется, и не стала доставать зеркала.

Но и не глядясь в зеркало, она думала, что и теперь еще не поздно, и она вспомнила Сергея Ивановича, который был особенно любезен к ней, приятеля Стивы, доброго Туровцына, который вместе с ней ухаживал за ее детьми во время скарлатины и был влюблен в нее. И еще был один совсем молодой человек, который, как ей шутя сказал муж, находил, что она красивее всех сестер. И самые страстные и невозможные романы представлялись Дарье Александровне. (19:183)

Dolly's urge to look at herself in the mirror reverberates with other instances in the novel when characters direct their attention to their own bodies. For instance, Vronskii strokes his leg, which hurts after his fall in the horse race, and enjoys the painful sensation, which Tolstoi associates with his self-centered and amoral personality. Kitty feels the marble coldness of her skin at the ball, which is associated with her surfacing sensuality and the self-admiration linked to her naïve—but still morally wrong—infatuation with Vronskii. Anna experiences the hallucinatory sensations of Vronskii's kisses on her skin, testifying to the obsessive and self-absorbed nature of her desire.¹¹ Just as with the above characters' physical sensations, Dolly's wish to admire her physical beauty (or what is left of it) suggests an autoerotic impulse. Unlike

¹¹ I analyze these instances in detail in the corresponding chapters.

the above characters, though, Dolly is unconsciously aware that her daydreams of being physically attractive are vain and immoral. She feels ashamed of her urge, and her shame prevents her from consummating the autoerotic impulse to look in the mirror.

Tolstoi's reference to vision in describing Dolly's deviation from the moral ideal of motherhood does not seem accidental. As discussed earlier, Plato's "cave" metaphor associates vision with morality. Tolstoi links Dolly's impulse to look at herself in the mirror with her erotic fantasies, which temporarily make her self-absorbed and alienate her from her children. Since Dolly's autoerotic urges alienate her from her children, Tolstoi suggests that these urges are immoral, just as her self-absorbed gaze would have been had she looked in the mirror.¹² Tolstoi directly associates gaze with moral authority when he writes that Dolly is afraid to look at herself in the mirror for fear of her shame if the coachman or the clerk *saw* her doing it ("она почувствовала, что ей будет совестно, если кто-нибудь из них *оглянется*" (emphasis added; 19:183)). The coachman and the clerk are common people who, according to Tolstoi's moral vision, have an innate moral sense. For instance, when Dolly has an unpleasant impression of Vronskii's estate and Anna's life there later in the scene, she double-checks this impression with the coachman—as if he were a figure of moral authority—and he confirms that life in the estate is fraught with falsehood. The coachman and the clerk's vision embodies the moral authority that stops Dolly from consummating her autoerotic urge when it undermines her moral sense.

Dolly's fear of being *seen* and *judged* by the coachman and the clerk indicates not only that she considers them to be figures of moral authority but also points to her close connection with the world of the peasantry. Her fear of their morally judgmental gaze reveals that she does

¹² Unlike Dolly's, Anna's vision does become self-directed in the episode in which it seems to her that she can see the shining of her own eyes in the darkness after she yields to Vronskii's pursuit and professes her love for him. Anna's self-directed gaze reflects her growing self-absorption regarding her passion for Vronskii, as she simultaneously grows alienated from others. I discuss Anna's vision in detail in the chapter devoted to her.

not separate herself from the common people and views herself as a part of their community, regardless of their differing social statuses. Since Dolly is a part of their community, their communal moral sense restrains Dolly's urge when her individual morality is about to fail. Since the shame of committing an act that the common people (and she herself) consider to be illicit prevents her from consummating the autoerotic urge to look at herself in the mirror, her vision never becomes self-directed. Likewise, Dolly, unlike Anna, never becomes self-absorbed in passion. Rather, Dolly's eyes remain open to the world, anticipating her emotional reconnection with her children and a regained appreciation of motherhood.

Having visited Anna, Dolly realizes the artificiality and misery of Anna's life with Vronskii and longs to return home to her children—the habitual domestic world which she now finds especially dear:

Оставшись одна, Долли помолилась Богу и легла в постель. Ей всею душой было жалко Анну в то время, как она говорила с ней; но теперь она не могла себя заставить думать о ней. Воспоминания о доме и детях с особенною, новою для нее прелестью, в каком-то новом сиянии возникали в ее воображении. Этот ее мир показался ей теперь так дорог и мил, что она ни за что не хотела вне его провести лишний день и решила, что завтра непременно уедет. (19:217)

Describing Dolly's renewed affection for her home and children, Tolstoi uses the visual image of light—"radiance" ("в каком-то новом сиянии возникали в ее воображении"). The fact that Dolly does not look at herself in the mirror suggests that, unlike Anna, she has not become enclosed in her sexual urges. Since her vision remains untainted by erotic impulse, she begins to appreciate her domestic life even more than she did before her temporary disappointment, seeing it in a "new light/radiance." In keeping with Plato, Tolstoi's association between Dolly's renewed, tender love for her family and the light imagery—"radiance" ("сияние")—indicates that love for family is the ideal to which one should strive, regardless of the hardships. While

Anna becomes seduced by carnal pleasure, Dolly does not, which allows her to regain her tenderness for and a new, greater appreciation of her family.

As previously mentioned, Tolstoi reveals Dolly's identity as a mother through her sole haptic sensation—that is, the pain in her cracked nipples from breastfeeding. The context in which Dolly recollects this sensation does not seem accidental. Dolly recalls the pain only when she undergoes an inner conflict between carnal pleasure and motherhood, when her erotic impulse challenges her identity as a parent. Since breastfeeding implies physical contact between a mother and a child, one can interpret the pain in Dolly's nipples not only as a testimony to the hardships of motherhood, but also as the pain of separation when her erotic impulses threaten her emotional (and, it would seem, physical) connection to her children. In this regard, Tolstoi may be contrasting carnal love to motherly love through the choice of Dolly's haptic memory. On the one hand, as Tolstoi's non-fictional writings testify, he views breastfeeding as a manifestation of a woman's morality, since he believes that breastfeeding is one of the duties prescribed to her by God. On the other hand, breastfeeding is evocative of intercourse, in the sense that both imply a kind of penetration (in the case of breastfeeding, a mother's breast "penetrates" a child's mouth). In choosing breastfeeding as Dolly's haptic experience while describing Anna's intercourse with Vronskii, Tolstoi highlights the contrast between motherhood and sexual desire—emphasizing Dolly's identity as a mother rather than as a sexual being.

Because motherhood rather than sexuality dominates Dolly's identity, she can overcome erotic temptation to gain a deeper appreciation of her domestic life—something that Anna cannot do. Contrasting carnal and parental loves, Tolstoi suggests that carnal love limits the parental. Unlike Stiva, whose love for his children is unequal, Dolly's love for her family is not only equal but also increases as she overcomes temptation.

In terms of Dolly's sensory perception, since both the haptic (pain in the nipples) and the visual ("radiant" motherly love) are associated with Dolly's motherhood, the haptic does not override the visual in Dolly's sensorium as it does in Stiva's (and in Anna's and Vronskii's, as will be discussed later). Since Dolly's haptic and visual experiences belong to the same source—her identity as a mother—her inherent physical connection to her children, reflected in the pain in her nipples, engenders the "radiance" of her renewed and strengthened motherly love. The fact that the physical/haptic does not limit but rather generates the visual suggests that Dolly has achieved the correct balance between body and soul (corporeal and spiritual, haptic and visual) through her role as a mother.

Tolstoi associates Dolly's haptic experience of the pain in her nipples with the pivotal moment of her moral near-fall, which, however, results in strengthened motherly love, reconfirming her identity as a mother. The fact that Dolly does not experience any other haptic sensations and hardly participates in haptic interactions may testify to the inner balance that she has achieved in motherhood. Unlike other characters, who deviate from or aspire to Tolstoi's moral ideal in the course of their lives—Dolly occupies a static space, resigning herself to and rejoicing in her family life, despite the hardships and frustrations that she endures. One could speculate that the characters' sensory (and particularly haptic) experiences testify to the fact that their lives are unbalanced, whether they aspire towards the spiritual or undergo moral failure. Therefore, the *lack* of Dolly's haptic experiences in comparison with the other major characters is as informative and significant for revealing Dolly's identity as are her haptic experiences themselves (however few). Her lack of haptic sensation indicates that she has achieved inner balance through motherhood, compromising with her husband's unfaithfulness and devoting herself to her children, whom she genuinely loves. Though her domestic situation is perhaps far

from ideal, she fulfills and is content with her role as a woman, as Tolstoi's views it, serving her family and working to preserve its unity despite her husband's escapades. In this sense, Dolly can be viewed as a static, unifying center for her family, desiring nothing more than she already has. She is therefore excluded from the failures and ascents that other characters undergo, and that Tolstoi communicates through their haptic (and other sensory) experiences.

3. Anna

In her discussion of Plato's influence on Tolstoi's representation of love in *Anna Karenina*, Irina Gutkin maintains that, according to Plato, "love of the body ... strives only to achieve an end," and "once satisfied, this sole driving force is withdrawn, leaving the love dead" (92–93). Gutkin suggests that Tolstoi draws on Plato's understanding of carnal love in *Anna Karenina* when he portrays it as a means to its own end, incapable of facilitating unity between Anna and Vronskii. This chapter argues that the haptic analysis of Anna's sense of touch (alongside her other sensory experiences) reveals that her sensuality interferes not only with her relationship with Vronskii, as Gutkin's argument suggests, but also hampers her immersion with the world on a broader scale. The investigation of Anna's touch demonstrates that her sensuality severs her relationships with other people, leads to the fragmentation of her identity's intrapersonal whole, and distorts her physical perception as well as her intellectual and moral judgment.¹³

While Tolstoi emphasizes Stiva's sensual nature from the first page of the novel, describing the character's acute awareness of his body and physical reality, he hardly describes Anna's sensory perceptions until the blizzard sequence during her return journey from Moscow

¹³ It should be noted that the sections of this chapter discussing Anna's haptic interactions with Karenin and Vronskii focus solely on those episodes that highlight Anna's role in undermining their touch. The subsequent chapters on Karenin and Vronskii contribute to the overall analysis of Anna's haptic interactions with both men by highlighting the ways in which Karenin and Vronskii cause their haptic alienation from Anna.

to Saint Petersburg. Likewise, while Stiva's enhanced sensuality undermines his physical contact with Dolly, revealing their emotional estrangement, Anna's touch is able to reconnect Stiva's family (as discussed in the previous chapter). Anna's ordinary sensory perception early in the novel—and her ability to reconnect Stiva's family members—suggests that her powerful, sensual nature is still dormant, not yet explicitly manifested.

Although Anna herself may be unaware of her powerful sensuality, Tolstoi intimates that Anna is a sensual person early on in the novel, in the scene portraying her “tactile” game with Dolly's children. The game itself is unquestionably innocent and, on the surface, testifies to Anna being a tender and likable aunt. However, the fact that Tolstoi portrays Anna as immersed in touch (Anna shares bodily contact with the children as they seek to give and receive touches and strokes) implicitly alludes to her sensuality. Tolstoi includes a parallel scene depicting Levin playing with Dolly's children later in the novel, in order to show that the two characters use manifestly different modes of haptic perception. While Anna's game with the children is “tactile,” Levin's game is “kinesthetic” (dynamic and muscular): he runs with the children and teaches them gymnastics, thus developing their *dexterity*.

На приглашение его [Левина] два старшие [дети] тотчас же соскочили к нему и побежали с ним так же просто, как бы они побежали с няней, с мисс Гуль или с матерью. Лили тоже стала проситься к нему, и мать передала ее ему; он посадил ее на плечо и побежал с ней.

— Не бойтесь, не бойтесь, Дарья Александровна! — говорил он, весело улыбаясь матери, — невозможно, чтоб я ушиб или уронил.

И, глядя на его ловкие, сильные, осторожно-заботливые и слишком напряженные движения, мать успокоилась и весело и одобрительно улыбалась, глядя на него.

... Левин пришел в то, часто находившее на него, детски веселое расположение духа, которое Дарья Александровна особенно любила в нем. Бегая с детьми, он учил их гимнастике, смешил мисс Гуль своим дурным английским языком и рассказывал Дарье Александровне свои занятия в деревне. (18:282)

Tolstoi's juxtaposition between "tactile" and "kinesthetic" perceptions in depicting Anna's and Levin's play is consistent with Aristotle's division of potentially sensual "touch" (i.e., physical contact, stroke, and caress of the skin) from touch that involves the "dexterity" of the human hand (and, one can suggest, the human body). Aristotle argues that touch is sensual and therefore base, whereas the dexterous human hand is, on the contrary, both a sign and a facilitator of human intellect. In keeping with Aristotle, the juxtaposition between Anna's tactile and Levin's kinesthetic games with the children points to Anna's implicitly sensual makeup.

Although Anna manages to reconnect Stiva's family, her sensuality begins to interfere with both her feelings and her body immediately after she encounters Vronskii on the train when arriving in Moscow. Although Vronskii only touches Anna *formally*, greeting her with a handshake, Tolstoi's references to Anna's subsequent physical sensations suggest that Vronskii had "touched" her much more intimately—stirring up both her feelings and her body. When Anna gets into a carriage with Stiva afterwards, she asks him about Vronskii and is perplexed to learn that he is Kitty's suitor, betraying her nascent affection. Anna seems to find her feelings for Vronskii alarming at first. Abruptly switching the conversation to Stiva's family troubles, Anna shakes her head as if trying to shake off something "superfluous" and "disturbing" ("что-то лишнее и мешавшее")—one can assume, the agitation caused by her attraction to Vronskii:

— А ты давно знаешь Вронского? — спросила она.
— Да. Ты знаешь, мы надеемся, что он женится на Кити.
— Да? — тихо сказала Анна. — Ну, теперь давай говорить о тебе, — прибавила она, встряхивая головой, как будто хотела физически отогнать что-то лишнее и мешавшее ей. (18:70)

Similarly, during Anna's conversation with Kitty a bit later, she decides not to mention Vronskii's generous two-hundred-ruble donation to a watchman's widow at the train station. Anna feels that Vronskii's gesture concerned—or in the original Russian, "touched"—not only

the widow, but also herself (“что-то касающееся до нее” 18:79). Anna recognizes Vronskii’s more-than-formal attention to her and thinks of their apparent mutual attraction as something unpleasant, something that “should not be”: “Но она не рассказала про эти двести рублей. Почему-то ей неприятно было вспоминать об этом. Она чувствовала, что в этом было что-то касающееся до нее и такое, чего не должно было быть” 18:79). Describing Anna’s attraction to Vronskii as something that causes her distress, Tolstoi suggests not only the novelty of Anna’s feelings for him, but also the fact that her attraction *is*, in fact, something extraneous that will meddle with her life and that should have been avoided. The way in which Anna shakes her head to rid herself of something “extraneous” and “disturbing”, and the way in which she keeps Vronskii’s generosity a secret from Kitty, reveals that Anna’s affection for Vronskii begins to interfere with both her body and her relationships.

Anna’s romantic interest in Vronskii affects her relationships with others in a more explicit, haptic way once she succumbs to her affection. When Vronskii unexpectedly stops by the Oblonskii house on the evening of Anna’s arrival, she catches a glimpse of him from the staircase and suddenly finds herself overcome with pleasure admixed with the fear of anticipation: “Анна, взглянув вниз, узнала тотчас же Вронского, и странное чувство удовольствия и вместе страха чего-то вдруг шевельнулось у нее в сердце” (18:81). Anna no longer finds her attraction for Vronskii “extraneous” and “disturbing”, a thing that “should not be.” Her growing emotional bond with Vronskii undermines her haptic interaction with Kitty at the ball, which takes place shortly thereafter. During the ball, Kitty does not fail to notice Anna and Vronskii’s mutual attraction—Vronskii willingly courts Anna, who is intoxicated by his attention. Kitty is deeply hurt to discover that the woman that she admires and the man that she loves have deceived her. During the *mazurka*, Anna takes Kitty’s hand with a carefree smile,

with no indication of guilt for flirting with her suitor. Kitty, however, takes Anna's hand but does not return the smile. Although Anna notices Kitty's frustration, she deliberately ignores Kitty's distress, turning to another woman and chatting cheerfully:

В середине мазурки, повторяя сложную фигуру, вновь выдуманную Корсунским, Анна вышла на середину круга, взяла двух кавалеров и подозвала к себе одну даму и Кити. Кити испуганно смотрела на нее, подходя. Анна прищурившись смотрела на нее и улыбнулась, пожав ей руку. Но заметив, что лицо Кити только выражением отчаяния и удивления ответило на ее улыбку, она отвернулась от нее и весело заговорила с другою дамой. (18:89)

Anna's intentional refusal to reach out to Kitty reveals her growing absorption with her passion for Vronskii, which renders her both emotionally and morally ignorant of Kitty's suffering. According to Montagu, since the primary embryonic matter of "ectoderm" gives rise to both the nervous system (the site of emotions) and the outer layer of skin, physical contact between two bodies expresses the individuals' emotional connection. It is true that Anna's ignoring Kitty's distress does not interrupt their physical contact, but it does sever their emotional ties. Anna and Kitty's physical (external) contact does not reflect their emotional (internal) bond, and thus highlights their alienation.

Anna's evolving infatuation with Vronskii undermines her relationship not only with Kitty but also with Dolly's children. Since Anna considers Kitty to be a rival for Vronskii's heart, her spoiled relationship with Kitty is psychologically motivated. However, her spoiled relationship with the children does not seem to have a clear psychological cause, but rather seems to be driven by the change in her moral state. Tolstoi believes children to be naturally perspicacious because of their virginity and moral purity. When he writes that Dolly's children can sense that Anna has changed after the ball, he suggests that Anna's passion has begun to corrupt her, alienating the naturally innocent children. Anna no longer takes interest in playing with the children, and they are no longer interested in playing with her: "Потому ли, что дети

непостоянны или очень чутки и почувствовали, что Анна в этот день совсем не такая, как в тот, когда они так полюбили ее, что она уже не занята ими, — но только они вдруг прекратили свою игру с тетей и любовь к ней, и их совершенно не занимало то, что она уезжает” (18:103). On a haptic level, while Anna and the children willingly touch one another during their “tactile” game before the ball, they ignore each other afterwards. Anna’s evolving carnal love for Vronskii severs her innocent love for the children, leaving a gap of emotional indifference and physical alienation between them.

While Anna perceives her attraction to Vronskii as something that is only *emotionally* pleasurable, as in the scene where she catches a glimpse of him from the staircase in the Oblonskiis’ house, she becomes acutely aware of its *bodily* effects during the train ride from Moscow to Saint Petersburg. Anna’s acute awareness of her body suggests that she has also become aware of her sexual desire for Vronskii and yielded to it. When Anna gets on the train, she tries to convince herself that she has no feelings for Vronskii, but the more she thinks of him, the more she becomes susceptible to the feelings that she is trying to deny. Anna’s body reflects these feelings. When she aloofly touches a cold window with an ivory paper knife, then passing its smooth, cold blade over her cheek, the sharp sensation excites her, and she plunges into a dream-delirium suggesting her sexual arousal:

Она провела разрезным ножом по стеклу, потом приложила его гладкую и холодную поверхность к щеке и чуть вслух не засмеялась от радости, вдруг беспричинно овладевшей ею. Она чувствовала, что нервы ее, как струны, натягиваются всё туже и туже на какие-то завинчивающиеся колышки. Она чувствовала, что глаза ее раскрываются больше и больше, что пальцы на руках и ногах нервно движутся, что внутри что-то давит дыханье [...]. (18:107)

Depicting Anna’s physical excitement, Tolstoi compares it with the accelerated forces operating in a steam train. Her physical tension resembles the pressure of an engine; her nervous finger and toe movements evoke the rapid motions of pistons; her intensified sensory perception

reverberates with the accelerated forces (for instance, pressure and speed) that a train produces. As was discussed in the chapter on Tolstoi's moral vision, Tolstoi was suspicious of technological progress, believing that it alienated man from the world of nature and physical labor, perpetuating the idle inequality of the elite and thus leading to their moral corruption. Associating Anna's passion with the machine's "unnatural" forces, Tolstoi suggests that Anna's passion for Vronskii is similarly "unnatural" and therefore destructive.

Anna's sexual excitement makes her acutely aware not only of her own body but also of her impressions of external reality, indicating that her evolving sensuality makes her senses more perceptive. Anna notices that she observes reality with extraordinary vivacity ("все образы и звуки ... с необычайною яркостью поражают ее" 18:107). According to Merleau-Ponty, a person is immersed in the world through his senses. However, Anna's sensory susceptibility to external impressions reveals that her senses, excited by desire, do not immerse her in the world but rather alienate her from it. Anna's passion distorts rather than clarifies her perception. When Anna gets on the train to Saint Petersburg, her perception is generally unremarkable, although detailed and precise. She perceives reality visually, tactually, and aurally, just as it is. She notices the bustle and noise of the car, the snow beating against the window and sticking to the glass, a conductor passing by (bundled up, coated with snow on one side), and random conversations about the terrible blizzard outside (18:106). Anna's perception shifts into distortion after she descends into the passionate dream-delirium. Reality appears nearly surreal. For instance, instead of checking the temperature, the stoker seems to gnaw at something in the wall. The legs of a woman travelling in the same car become unnaturally elongated to fill the car's entire length, clouding it in darkness. As the train pulls into the station, its screeching and banging are perceived by Anna as the terrifying cry of a human being torn apart (an association apparently

triggered by her unconscious recollection of the watchman killed when she arrived in Moscow):

“Мужик этот с длинною талией принялся грызть что-то в стене, старушка стала протягивать ноги во всю длину вагона и наполнила его черным облаком; потом что-то страшно заскрипело и застучало, как будто раздирали кого-то” (18:108). Anna’s senses, compromised by her passion for Vronskii, *alter* rather than *reflect* her reality. Anna’s surreal, or one can say “unnatural,” perceptions of reality result from her “unnatural” (according to Tolstoi’s moral vision) passion for Vronskii.

Anna’s distorted perception during her delirium suggests not only her physical confusion but also her intellectual and moral disorientation. As the chapter on haptic perception demonstrates, Rousseau and Diderot highlight the importance of the senses in a person’s interactions with the external world. Rousseau’s program of cultivation for the senses proclaims that a person learns both logic and morality from observing and comparing/contrasting his basic perceptual acts. Both Rousseau and Diderot argue that a person receives the most accurate information about the world by verifying one sensory act with another. In other words, a person’s knowledge about the world (including his intellectual and moral judgments, for Rousseau) depends on the clarity and accuracy of his sensory perceptions. Describing the way in which Anna considers her experiences, the narrator states that Anna thinks of the images in her delirium as being only vivid, whereas a further account of her delirium reveals that her perception of reality is not only intensified but also distorted. In keeping with Rousseau and Diderot, Anna’s failure to recognize the distortion of her sensory perceptions indicates that her sensuality jeopardizes not only her physical senses but also her intellectual and moral faculties.

This anticipates the confusion in the scenes leading to her suicide, wherein Anna reads physical and moral corruption in all things and people that she observes.¹⁴

Although Anna's wakeful perception is accurate, especially compared to that of her surreal dream, her vision suggests that her body has begun to dominate her mind/soul. Plato's "cave" metaphor associates sight with mind and considers sight to be the most intellectual and spiritual of the senses. In a cave illuminated only by *fire*, one cannot see the true images of things (the "ideas"), but only their *shadows*. In order to see the "ideas," one must leave the cave and ascend to the earth's surface, gazing directly at the sun. This ascension requires moral development, by which Plato implies taming one's carnal desires and needs. Although Anna's wakeful vision is *not* distorted, but rather is perceptive of minute details, as was mentioned above, it *is* restricted. Anna's visual impressions are limited to the inside of the car: the nighttime blizzard, with snow sticking to the windows, makes it impossible for her to see outside. (She does see the snow on the windows, but nothing beyond.) Not only is Anna's long-range vision obstructed, but her vision *within* the car is also suppressed. The light in the car is quite dim, which makes it impossible for Anna to read without a lamp, bright enough only to read a book. Tolstoi's references to the "lamp" (fire) and the "twilight" (semi-shadow) of the car reverberate with Plato's depiction of the "cave" and suggest Anna's carnal rather than spiritual proclivities.

Furthermore, Anna "sees" this surreal dream when her eyes are apparently open: she can physically see reality as it is, but it becomes altered in her mental retina. Anna's open eyes, as she dreams, suggest that the dream suppresses her vision, rendering her unable to make accurate judgments of reality. Anna's passion "blinds" her. Tolstoi's representation of Anna's vision *in*

¹⁴ For instance, the smell of good food disgusts her (19:342); she sees children on the street eating "dirty" ice cream; she hears a man whisper something "disgusting"; she sits on a "soiled" seat in the train car; she mentally undresses a woman sitting across from her and sees her as physically "ugly"; she hears a girl laughing "unnaturally," and she concludes that all people "hate" one another (19:340; 345).

the dream reflects this notion even more explicitly. Her passionate dream-delirium ends in a flash of red fire, blinding her—she sees everything as if hidden by a wall, and she feels as if she is falling through something: “потом красный огонь ослепил глаза, и потом всё закрылось стеной. Анна почувствовала, что она провалилась” (18:108). The flash of red fire, which illuminates the dim space only for an instant but ultimately eliminates light, reflects the fact that Anna succumbs to rather than tames her carnal urges. Unlike Plato’s protagonist, who *ascends* towards the *sun*, Anna *descends* into the ultimate *darkness* of the “cave” (without even a dim light) and therefore *away* from true knowledge of reality and moral perfection.¹⁵

Anna’s encounter with Vronskii at the railway station immediately after the delirium sequence reveals the way in which her passion “blinds” her judgment. Depicting Anna and Vronskii’s encounter, Tolstoi associates Vronskii with a “shadow,” which evokes Plato’s cave metaphor and associates Anna’s evolving passion for the man with untamed carnal desires, typical of those dwelling in the “cave.” When Anna notices Vronskii at the station, he stands between her and the streetlamp, thus creating a shadow that conceals his face and hampers her vision: “... человек в военном пальто подле нее самой заслонил ей колеблющийся свет фонаря. [...] Она довольно долго, ничего не отвечая, вглядывалась в него и, несмотря на тень, в которой он стоял, видела, или ей казалось, что видела, и выражение его лица и

¹⁵ Some other moments in the scene also point to Anna’s compromised moral state. In his lecture on the novel, Vladimir Nabokov comments on the details, which, according to Nabokov, are meant to suggest Anna’s moral “imbalance.” For instance, she notices the snow beating against the “left” window of the car, observes the stoker covered with snow only on “one” side, and discerns a missing button on the stoker’s nankeen coat (“снег, бивший в левое окно и налипающий на стекло” 18:105; “вид закутанного, мимо прошедшего кондуктора, занесенного снегом, с одной стороны” 18:105; “мужик, в длинном нанковом пальто, на котором не доставало пуговицы” 18:108). For Nabokov, Tolstoi’s reference to the “left” window and the conductor covered in snow on “one” side reflects “Anna’s one-sided mood, a moral loss of balance” (155). This moral loss of balance suggests a deficiency, which Tolstoi seems to express through the button missing from the stoker’s coat. Although Anna’s ordinary, detailed, and accurate perceptions of reality in her wakeful state should suggest her undistorted judgment, Tolstoi’s references to “one-sidedness” (as described by Nabokov) and the deficiency suggested in the missing button indirectly point to a defect in Anna’s moral condition.

глаз. Это было опять то выражение почтительного восхищения, которое так подействовало на нее вчера” (18:109). Vronskii’s casting of a shadow, which obstructs Anna’s vision, points to his being the cause of Anna’s moral fall. Although Anna is perhaps correct to read admiration on Vronskii’s face, her growing desire for him makes her a poor judge of both his character and her own—like the shadow, which is cast by Vronskii and conceals his face. While Anna believes that Vronskii pursues her deliberately, out of love (“Ей не нужно было спрашивать, зачем он тут. Она знала это так же верно, как если б он сказал ей, что он тут для того, чтобы быть там, где она” 18:109), Vronskii steps out of the train to get some seltzer water (as a reader learns in the subsequent chapter), thus meeting Anna by accident and professing his passion for her in the spur of the moment. Infatuated with Vronskii, Anna fails to see that his admiration is but the impulsive attraction of an ambitious and corrupted man: he only seeks to satisfy his carnal desires and is ignorant of the harm that his persistent pursuit may cause, just as she remains ignorant of the harm that her passion may bring her own family.

Since Tolstoi portrays Anna’s passion for Vronskii as “blinding” in the delirium sequence, it is perhaps not accidental that he describes the way in which her passion alienates her from her husband through her eyes. At Princess Betsy’s party, Anna reciprocates Vronskii’s flirting and eventually casts a loving gaze in his direction, bringing him to understand that she is non-verbally professing her love:

Она все силы ума своего напрягла на то, чтобы сказать то, что должно; но вместо того она остановила на нем свой взгляд, полный любви, и ничего не ответила.

«Вот оно!—с восторгом думал он. —Тогда, когда я уже отчаивался и когда, казалось, не будет конца, — вот оно! Она любит меня. Она признается в этом». (18:147–48)

After Anna reveals her love for Vronskii to Karenin, her husband notices that her eyes appear shielded, separating her from him. When Karenin tries to admonish Anna for her questionable

behavior at the party, she casually dismisses his admonitions with feigned ignorance. Looking into Anna's eyes, Karenin sees that they have become "impenetrable," and that the depth of her soul, which had been "open" to him, is now "closed":

Анна говорила, что приходило ей на язык, и сама удивлялась, слушая себя, своей способности лжи. [...] Она чувствовала себя одетою в непроницаемую броню лжи. [...] Он говорил и смотрел на ее смеющиеся, страшные теперь для него своею непроницаемостью глаза и, говоря, чувствовал всю бесполезность и праздность своих слов. [...] Он видел, что глубина ее души, всегда прежде открытая пред ним, была закрыта от него. (18:153–54)

It is true that Anna's passion is not the only cause of the spouses' alienation from one another. Despite being married, sharing mutual respect and even sometimes tenderness, Anna and Karenin are not emotionally close. That they respect one another in place of genuine love makes their marriage a superficial union and reveals the inherent emotional gap between them. For instance, early in the novel, when Dolly recalls the Karenin household and the spouses' relationship, she thinks of it as "false" ("Правда, сколько она могла запомнить свое впечатление в Петербурге у Карениных, ей не нравился самый дом их; что-то было фальшивое во всем складе их семейного быта" 18:71). However, although Anna and Karenin's relationship had not been emotionally close or particularly genuine, as Dolly's impression suggests, this seems to be the first secret that Anna has held from Karenin that would cause her to openly resent him. Anna's growing attraction to Vronskii makes her feel as if she were dressed in an "impenetrable shield of lies" ("непроницаемая броня лжи" 18:153), making her resentful of Karenin's admonitions and allowing her to lie with ease. Anna's "impenetrable" eyes, like her words and conduct during her conversation with Karenin, conceal rather than reveal her true feelings.¹⁶

¹⁶ To compare, Tolstoi consistently emphasizes that Kitty has truthful eyes, reflecting her inner honesty and morality, which in turn attract Levin. Tolstoi also demonstrates that Levin and Kitty's relationship is founded on their mutual honesty with one another and ability to forgive one another's faults.

In addition, Anna's "impenetrable" eyes indicate that her passion has not only made her vision a means of deceit, but also that it has severed her connection with Karenin—however faint. According to Merleau-Ponty, the senses facilitate the connection, or the "intertwinement," between people. Blurring the boundaries of individual bodies, the senses interconnect humans into an "intercorporeal" whole. In keeping with Merleau-Ponty, Anna's eyes' "impenetrability" and her feeling of protection behind an "impenetrable shield of lies" suggest that her passion for Vronskii has divided them with an "impenetrable" barrier. Associating Anna's vision with lying and division, jeopardized by carnal love, Tolstoi demonstrates that this carnality is a source of emotional and physical discord among people.

In order to demonstrate Karenin's fear of the emotional sphere, Tolstoi uses the metaphor of a "bridge" cast over the "bottomless deep of life"—wherein the "bridge" represents Karenin's artificial existence, regulated by social and religious rules, and the "bottomless deep of life" represents the reality of genuine human relations, which Karenin finds troubling ("Теперь он испытывал чувство, подобное тому, какое испытал бы человек, спокойно прошедший над пропастью по мосту и вдруг увидавший, что этот мост разобран и что там пучина. Пучина эта была — сама жизнь, мост — та искусственная жизнь, которую прожил Алексей Александрович" 18:151). Like Anna's "impenetrable shield," Karenin's "bridge" can be understood as a protective measure: just as Anna's "shield of lies" protects her from Karenin's reproach, Karenin's "bridge" protects him from interacting on a personal level. His emotional restraint doubles Anna's barrier, aggravating their alienation. His fear of feelings makes it hard for him to reach out to Anna and have a sincere conversation, whereas Anna's passion fortifies her resentment. While seemingly protective measures, Karenin's "bridge" and Anna's "shield" isolate them from one another.

When Karenin briefly overcomes his fear of emotion (stepping off the bridge into the “bottomless deep,” to use Tolstoi’s metaphor), changing his moralistic tone and expressing genuine care, he seems to break through Anna’s “impenetrable shield” as well. Tolstoi shows that the expression of Anna’s “impenetrable” eyes changes. Anna stops looking at Karenin with derision, as her face acquires a softer expression: “На мгновение лицо ее опустилось, и потухла насмешливая искра во взгляде” (18:155). Anna’s softer *look* suggests that Karenin’s genuine care has reached her, temporarily penetrating her eyes’ “shield.” Nonetheless, even if Karenin has reached Anna for an instant, Anna’s passion for Vronskii remains an obstacle, preventing Karenin from permanently restoring even their typically-respectful relationship. Since Anna has experienced passion, apparently for the first time, Karenin’s restrained love-respect is ineffective and therefore unable to satisfy the emotional needs and physical desires awakened by Vronskii’s love. When Karenin assures Anna that he loves her, Anna resents the claim, apparently thinking that Karenin does not know what true love is and rejecting his dispassionate kind of “love”: “но слово «люблю» опять возмутило ее. Она подумала: «любит? Разве он может любить? Если б он не слышал, что бывает любовь, он никогда и не употреблял бы этого слова. Он и не знает, что такое любовь»” (18:155–56). Dismissing Karenin’s supplications after her momentary doubt, Anna restores the “impenetrable wall of some cheerful perplexity/непроницаем[ая] стен[а] какого-то веселого недоумения” (18:156–57), making it impossible for Karenin to reach out to her again.

Tolstoi concludes the scene by portraying Anna’s “reversed” vision. Having dismissed her husband’s reprimands, Anna lies in bed, her eyes open with ecstasy, and it seems to her that she can see *her own eyes* shining in the darkness: “— Поздно, поздно, уж поздно, — прошептала она с улыбкой. Она долго лежала неподвижно с открытыми глазами, блеск

которых, ей казалось, она сама в темноте видела” (18:156). Merleau-Ponty’s conception of the senses as the means of “intertwinement” suggests that Anna’s vision does not connect her with another person, but rather self-encloses, rendering her an isolated entity absorbed in her passion for Vronskii and alienated from her husband.

Anna’s passion seems to cover not only her eyes but also her body with the “shield of lies,” evident from an episode taking place before the steeplechase, at the Karenins’ dacha. Anna hides her passion from Karenin and pretends to be casual in her husband’s presence, just as she does in the above-analyzed scene after Princess Betsy’s party. When she leaves for the race before Karenin, he formally kisses her hand. Describing the kiss and Anna’s reaction, Tolstoi introduces a significant gap between the two aspects of touch. After Karenin kisses Anna’s hand, Tolstoi does not describe Anna’s sensations. Instead, he writes that Anna cheerfully responds to Karenin’s earlier phrase, as she apparently walks towards her carriage. Anna *feels* Karenin’s kiss only after she leaves his sight, thus with a delay:

Алексей Александрович поцеловал ее руку.

— Ну, так до свиданья. Ты заедешь чай пить, и прекрасно! — сказала она и вышла, сияющая и веселая. Но, как только она перестала видеть его, она почувствовала то место на руке, к которому прикоснулись его губы, и с отвращением вздрогнула. (18:217)

The delay in Anna’s feeling of Karenin’s kiss can be dually interpreted. On the one hand, it can be read as a manifestation of Anna’s haptic memory—a phantom hallucinatory sensation that involuntarily surfaces on her skin and anticipates the haptic hallucination shortly before her suicide, when she feels that Vronskii’s kisses cover her body (“оглядывая себя всю, она почувствовала вдруг на себе его поцелуи и, содрогаясь, двинула плечами” 19:335). In both episodes, Tolstoi uses the verb “to feel” even though he describes a recollection in the form of physical sensation, not caused by an immediate act of touching. On the other hand, the way in

which Tolstoi describes Karenin's touch before Anna feels his kiss may mean that Tolstoi implies an actual delay in Anna's physical perception. (To compare, Vronskii's kisses do not immediately precede the phantom sensations that Anna feels shortly before her suicide. Rather, she experiences a cumulative sensation, encompassing all of Vronskii's kisses on her body in the past and thus representing a clear instance of memory.) According to Merleau-Ponty's conception of touch, the sense's two simultaneous phases (the act of touching and feeling touched) make it a means of entwinement. In keeping with Merleau-Ponty, the delay in Anna's physical response to Karenin's touch (she is touched but does not *feel* the touch immediately, at least according to Tolstoi's depiction of the scene) testifies to her internal alienation from Karenin. In addition, Tolstoi associates the delay in Anna's perception with her deceit. While Anna conceals her true feelings about Karenin verbally, pretending to be happy and cheerful in his presence, her body seems to conceal these feelings physically as well, filtering her sensations to prevent an immediate honest reaction—of disgust—to Karenin's kiss. Such a reading of the scene suggests that Anna's delayed sensation reflects her altered, deceitful personality: her body, like her eyes, is covered by the "shield of lies" filtering her physical sensations and assisting in the deception of her husband.

Anna's passion for Vronskii not only severs her external connections with other people but also divides the internal whole of her identity. The first time that Anna experiences an instance of "split personality" occurs during her train ride from Moscow to Saint Petersburg. In her dream-delirium, Anna begins to doubt her own identity—whether she is "herself" (her ordinary, moral self) or "somebody else" (her newly-discovered, sensual self): "И что сама я тут? Я сама или другая?" (18:107). The conflict within Anna's identity—between her ordinary "self" and her new sensual "other self"—is reflected in her touch. After she consummates her

passion with Vronskii, Anna begins to have a recurring nightmare in which she sees herself with two “husbands”—Karenin and Vronskii—both of whom caress her body:

Ей снилось, что оба вместе были ее мужья, что оба расточали ей свои ласки. Алексей Александрович плакал, целуя ее руки, и говорил: как хорошо теперь! И Алексей Вронский был тут же, и он был также ее муж. И она, удивляясь тому, что прежде ей казалось это невозможным, объясняла им, смеясь, что это гораздо проще и что они оба теперь довольны и счастливы. Но это сновидение, как кошмар, давило ее, и она просыпалась с ужасом. (18:159)

Karenin’s and Vronskii’s “doubled” caresses of Anna’s body demonstrate the duplicity of Anna’s feelings—her duty to her husband and her passion for Vronskii. Her attempt to reconcile the two fails. While Anna enjoys the “doubled” caresses at the beginning of the dream, the vision begins to disturb her, forcing her to wake in terror to her reality. She perceives her ambiguous role as a wife and a lover for what it is: not only an impossible but also a lewd and shameful arrangement.

In the scene after she confesses her secret love for Vronskii to Karenin, Anna’s own gestures reflect her inner conflict. Waiting for Karenin’s decision, unable to decide whether she wants to return to a habitual but stifling life with her husband or to pursue a life of passion with Vronskii, losing her social privileges, she unconsciously clasps the hair on *both* sides of her head:

«Ах, что я делаю!» сказала она себе, почувствовав вдруг боль в обеих сторонах головы. Когда она опомнилась, она увидела, что держит обеими руками свои волосы около висков и сжимает их. (18:305)

Tolstoi repeats the pronoun “both” (“обеих сторонах головы,” “обеими руками”) twice within two adjacent sentences, emphasizing the gesture’s duality.

Depicting Anna’s confusion in the scene, Tolstoi also compares Anna’s emotional state with “double vision”: “Она чувствовала, что в душе ее всё начинает двоиться, как дwoятся иногда предметы в усталых глазах. Она не знала иногда, чего она боится, чего желает.

Бойтся ли она и желает ли она того, что было, или того, что будет, и чего именно она желает, она не знала” (18:305). In keeping with Plato’s notion of vision as a spiritual sense, Tolstoi’s comparison of Anna’s inner conflict with doubling *vision* confirms that Anna’s “split personality” is not only emotional but also moral in nature. Since “double” vision suggests two separate focal points, which fail to merge into a single image and thus blur a person’s vision, the comparison of Anna’s inner conflict with *double* vision suggests that her awakened sensuality has rendered her morally confused—divided between the moral values advocated by Christianity and her husband, and the immoral pursuits that align with her feelings. For instance, although Anna realizes that her passion for Vronskii is wrong from a Christian perspective, she refuses to suppress it:

Она беспрестанно повторяла: «Боже мой! Боже мой!» Но ни «Боже», ни «мой» не имели для нее никакого смысла. Мысль искать своему положению помощи в религии была для нее, несмотря на то, что она никогда не сомневалась в религии, в которой была воспитана, так же чужда, как искать помощи у самого Алексея Александровича. Она знала вперед, что помощь религии возможна только под условием отречения от того, что составляло для нее весь смысл жизни. (18:305)

Justifying her sensuality, Anna goes so far as to mentally assert that God created her to be sensual, and unfairly blames Karenin for deliberately denying her an outlet for her naturally passionate personality. She even misinterprets her genuine motherly love for her son, now thinking of it only as an outlet for unrealized sexual desires:

Они не знают, как он восемь лет душил мою жизнь, душил всё, что было во мне живого, что он ни разу и не подумал о том, что я живая женщина, которой нужна любовь. Не знают, как на каждом шагу он оскорблял меня и оставался доволен собой. Я ли не старалась, всеми силами старалась, найти оправдание своей жизни? Я ли не пыталась любить его, любить сына, когда уже нельзя было любить мужа? Но пришло время, я поняла, что я не могу больше себя обманывать, что я живая, что я не виновата, что Бог меня сделал такою, что мне нужно любить и жить. (18:308–09)

Though Anna may be correct that her passionate nature is something inherent, her effort to justify her sensuality leads to her poor judgment about her husband, with whom she had shared a respectful if not passionate relationship, and about her son, whom she loves dearly. Although Anna's distorted discernment is understandable psychologically, it indicates that her sensuality undermines her ability to judge truthfully, jeopardizing her moral sense.

Anna tries to restore the wholeness of her personality in the scene after her childbirth, which was followed by complications that nearly caused her death. Burning up with fever and fearing that she will die after giving birth, Anna seeks her husband's forgiveness. She tries to suppress her sensual self in favor of her "true" ("настоящая") self. Begging Karenin to forgive her, Anna compares herself to a martyr who had been a sinner but then reformed: "Одно мне нужно: ты прости меня, прости совсем! Я ужасна, но мне няня говорила: святая мученица — как ее звали? — она хуже была" (18:434). Anna's comparison suggests that she perceives herself as a sinner, thus realizing that her passion for Vronskii is illicit. She contrasts Vronskii to Karenin and her "other" (sensual) self to her "true" self. Anna describes her "other," sensual self as something extraneous, implying that the kind of person she had been before her infatuation with Vronskii, her moral self, had been "true": "Я всё та же... Но во мне есть другая, я ее боюсь — она полюбила того, и я хотела возненавидеть тебя и не могла забыть про ту, которая была прежде. Та не я. Теперь я настоящая, я вся" (18:434). Anna tries to persuade Karenin that she has rid her "true" self of her sensual self to regain her "wholeness" ("я вся"), but the positioning of her two hands is telling of a continuing inner struggle. While Anna holds Karenin with one hand, she pushes him away with the other: "Нет, ты не можешь простить! Я знаю, этого нельзя простить! Нет, нет, уйди, ты слишком хорош! — Она держала одною горячею рукой его руку, другою отталкивала его" (18:434). Anna's attraction towards and

repulsion against Karenin reveals that her sensual self persists in both her body and her identity, pointing to her emotional and moral duplicity.¹⁷

Anna's failure to overcome her sensual self, causing her apparent inner resistance to reconciliation, is evident from tactile interactions with her husband in an episode during her recovery. In an earlier scene, wherein Anna has just returned from Moscow, she tries to forget Vronskii and acts as if their encounter did not stir up feelings. Her tactile interaction with Karenin in these scenes reveals their consideration and care: Karenin presses Anna's hand when she comes home, betraying genuine joy at her arrival, and Anna takes him by the elbow to walk him to the study where he reads in the evening. Their considerate touch reflects a habitual and mutually respectful spousal relationship. However, Anna's developing love for Vronskii negatively affects this relationship and, therefore, its touch. After Anna begs for Karenin's forgiveness on her "deathbed", he offers to maintain her social status and good name if she promises never to see her lover again. Anna tries to keep her promise, but does so reluctantly, with visible strain. No matter how hard Anna tries to force herself to appreciate Karenin's kindness and regain her respect, she cannot help but feel revulsion towards her husband and long for Vronskii. Tolstoi shows Anna's revulsion for Karenin in haptic terms: when Karenin tries to take Anna's hand to express his appreciation for her good will, Anna instinctively pulls away, and takes his hand only after an instant of hesitation when she manages to take control over her aversion:

Алексей Александрович подвинулся и хотел взять ее руку.
Первым движением она отдернула свою руку от его влажной, с большими
надутыми жилами руки, которая искала ее; но, видимо сделав над собой усилие,
пожала его руку. (18:445)

¹⁷ While Anna's passion for Vronskii causes her inner conflict (an inner emotional and moral "split"), Levin's love for Kitty causes him no inner conflict but rather "doubles" his happiness ("они испытали новое удвоенное счастье любви" 19:51), immersing him in the world of human community (which I discuss in more detail in the chapter on Levin and Kitty).

Tolstoi divides the depiction of Karenin and Anna's touch into two paragraphs, highlighting their emotional and physical alienation on a textual level. He describes Karenin's hand as "moist," "with large bulging veins" in the second paragraph, thus attributing the depiction to Anna's point of view. The image of Karenin's hand produces the impression of being unpleasant to the touch, revealing that Anna's aversion towards her husband is physical as well as emotional. Tolstoi mentions her feelings more directly shortly thereafter: "Она тревожно играла кистями халата, взглядывая на него [Каренина] с тем мучительным чувством физического отвращения к нему, за которое она упрекала себя, но которого не могла преодолеть" (18:446). Once Anna recovers from her illness and is no longer afraid of dying, she is no longer able (nor genuinely willing) to eliminate her sensual nature and suppress her passion for Vronskii. Because of her enduring desire, she begins to loathe her husband's body, now perceiving its leanness as particularly repulsive and avoiding any contact. Shortly thereafter, Anna sees Vronskii before his planned departure to Tashkent. She decides to leave her husband and depart for Italy with Vronskii and their newborn daughter. Instead of regaining her "real," non-sensual self, which she had associated with the "wholeness" of her personality, Anna surrenders herself to passion, thus further enabling the fragmentation of her identity and perception evident in the scenes leading to her suicide.

Anna's passion for Vronskii compromises not only her relationship with her husband, but also her close bond with her son Serëzha. When Anna surprises Serëzha on his birthday, their sensory interactions reflect a deep emotional connection. During the secret visit, they hardly speak, but primarily interact through touch. The physical contact between their bodies in place of words—oral-aural interaction that would maintain their physical distance—highlights Anna and Serëzha's profound emotional proximity. Serëzha moves under his mother's hands to expose as

many different parts of his body to her as possible (“— Мама! — проговорил он, двигаясь под ее руками, чтобы разными местами тела касаться ее рук” 19:105). He embraces her shoulders, leans on her, and rubs against her neck (“он перехватился пухлыми ручонками от спинки кровати за ее плечи, привалился к ней, обдавая ее тем милым сонным запахом и теплотой, которые бывают только у детей, и стал тереться лицом об ее шею и плечи” 19:105). Anna clasps Serēzha’s body in her arms (“— Сережа! Мальчик мой милый! — проговорила она, задыхаясь и обнимая руками его пухлое тело” 19:105). She then probes his changed, grown form, his now-longer legs, thinner cheeks, and shorter curls, and sits next to him on his bed, unable to let go of his hand:

Она узнавала и не узнавала его голые, такие большие теперь ноги, выпроставшиеся из одеяла, узнавала эти похуделые щеки, эти обрезанные, короткие завитки волос на затылке, в который она так часто целовала его. Она ощупывала всё это и не могла ничего говорить; слезы душили ее. [...]

... не выпуская его руки, села у его кровати на стул, на котором было приготовлено платье. (19:105–06)

Anna and Serēzha’s touches are not only mutual but also simultaneous. The first part of their meeting, which ends the chapter, concludes in an instant of perfect unity expressed in simultaneous touch: Serēzha touches Anna’s hand precisely at the moment when it is touching Serēzha. Serēzha grabs her hand, which is stroking his hair, and kisses it: “— Я знал, я знал! — повторял он свою любимую фразу и, схватив ее руку, которая ласкала его волосы, стал прижимать ее ладонью к своему рту и целовать ее” (19:106). In keeping with Merleau-Ponty, the simultaneity of their touches (touching while being touched) suggests that they are intertwined into an intercorporeal whole.

Anna experiences this profound bond with her son not only emotionally, but also spiritually. When Anna meets Serēzha after returning home to Saint Petersburg in the beginning of the novel, she feels the nearly “*physical* pleasure” (emphasis added) of his closeness and

caress, which puts her at *moral* ease: “Анна испытывала почти физическое наслаждение в ощущении его близости и ласки и нравственное успокоение, когда встречала его простодушный, доверчивый и любящий взгляд и слышала его наивные вопросы” (18:114). According to Tolstoi, children are morally pure, because they have not yet attained sexual maturity and thus are uncorrupted. Anna’s son seems to be the only uncorrupted aspect of her life: her aunt married her off to Karenin, forcing her into a union without genuine love and into a society that propagates moral depravity. Serēzha’s simple, trusting, loving gaze and his naïve questions testify to his artlessness and innocence, a form of pure morality that Anna seeks as she tries to overcome her attraction to Vronskii at the beginning of their romance.

Anna’s profound emotional connection with her son in the birthday scene informs her drastic change in feelings in subsequent scenes. When Karenin forbids Anna to see her son after the surprise visit, she finds herself in an acute emotional isolation (“она навсегда не только физически, но духовно была разъединена с ним, и поправить этого нельзя было” 19:110). She is unconsolated even by her second child—her daughter Annie, who lives with her. When the nanny brings Anna her daughter, she can only think of Serēzha, realizing that she loves him more than her daughter—if she loves her daughter at all: “при виде этого ребенка [дочери Анны] ей еще яснее было, что то чувство, которое она испытывала к нему, было даже не любовь в сравнении с тем, что она чувствовала к Сереже” (19:110). Tolstoi suggests that Anna’s love for her son is so powerful partly because her son was the only outlet for love during her marriage, since she respected but never loved his father: “На первого ребенка, хотя и от нелюбимого человека, были положены все силы любви, не получавшие удовлетворения ...” (19:110). By contrast, Anna’s passion for Vronskii seems to diminish her love for his daughter: “Всё в этой девочке было мило, но всё это почему-то не забирало за сердце”

(19:110). Anna's unequal love for her children, by which she comes to resemble Stiva, shows the fragmented nature of her passion as it affects her natural motherly love, limiting her love for her daughter as compared to her son.

Anna's tactile exchange with her daughter reflects their alienation. It is true that Tolstoi describes their touch as reciprocal, which theoretically suggests their bond. (Anna offers her daughter a finger and she grasps it; Anna offers her lip and she sucks it into her mouth, as if in a kiss.) However, Tolstoi introduces negative rhetorical structures into the description of Anna's touch ("нельзя было не"), revealing that Anna kisses her daughter and plays with her only out of duty—not of love:

Нельзя было не улыбнуться, не поцеловать девочку, нельзя было не подставить ей палец, за который она ухватила, взвизгивая и подпрыгивая всем телом; нельзя было не подставить ей губу, которую она, в виде поцелуя, забрала в ротик. И всё это сделала Анна, и взяла ее на руки, и заставила ее попрыгать, и поцеловала ее свежую щечку и оголенные локотки ... (19:110)

The negative structures in Tolstoi's depiction of Anna's touch undermine the initial impression of their bond. Anna's physical touch proves to be vacuous, conveying no love, and thus reveals the underlying gap between Anna and her daughter beneath their physical contact.

Emotionally isolated, Anna tries to extend her connection with her son, despite the physical distance dividing them. She takes Serëzha's pictures out of an album and spreads them out on the table, recalling him at different ages. However, as she does so, one of Vronskii's pictures takes over her attention and she seems to forget about her son completely, absorbed by thoughts of her lover. Anna uses Vronskii's picture to unstick the last of Serëzha's, which is lodged in the album. Anna's attention shifts from Serëzha to Vronskii when she holds his photo in her hand:

Разрезного ножика не было на столе, и она, вынув карточку, бывшую рядом (это была карточка Вронского, сделанная в Риме, в круглой шляпе и с длинными

волосами), ею вытолкнула карточку сына. «Да, вот он!» сказала она, взглянув на карточку Вронского, и вдруг вспомнила, кто был причиной ее теперешнего горя. [...] Но теперь вдруг, увидав это мужественное, благородное, столь знакомое и милое ей лицо, она почувствовала неожиданный прилив любви к нему. ... Она послала к нему просить его прийти к ней сейчас же; с замиранием сердца, придумывая слова, которыми она скажет ему все, и те выражения его любви, которые утешат ее, она ждала его. (19:111)

The reference to a paperknife evokes the train scene, in which the sexual arousal incited by Anna's growing attraction to Vronskii is sparked by the cold, smooth blade of a paperknife against her cheek. Vronskii is here again associated with a paperknife, an object meant for dividing the whole, reflecting the way in which Anna's passion undermines her relationships and her perceptions of reality. Vronskii's photograph distracts Anna's attention from her son—as if dividing them once again, now not only physically but mentally—and diverts her attention to her lover. When Anna exclaims: “Да, вот он!/Yes, here he is!” pushing Serëzha's picture from the album, it seems as if she is still thinking about her son, whereas the entire sentence makes it evident that she is in fact already thinking of Vronskii. The mental transition from son to lover is almost seamless, suggesting that passion has begun to dominate Anna's identity. Feeling a surge of passion as she looks at Vronskii's photograph, she anticipates how he will console her grief with assurances of his love. Anna's carnal love transforms the genuine suffering of losing her son into a pretext for eliciting her lover's attention, thus overriding her motherly love and revealing her emotional estrangement from Serëzha.

In keeping with Tolstoi's condemnation of carnal love as a force that divides rather than unites, Anna's passion for Vronskii undermines not only her connections with other people but also her emotional—and consequently physical—unity with Vronskii. Their attraction results in their alienation. Anna herself summarizes the two-stage development of a relationship based on carnal love in a scene shortly before her suicide: “Мы именно шли навстречу до связи, а

потом неудержимо расходимся в разные стороны” (19:343). Anna and Vronskii’s haptic interaction reflects the two stages of their relationship. The previously mentioned blizzard scene, wherein Anna returns from Moscow to Saint-Petersburg and encounters Vronskii at the transit station, reveals their attraction. When Vronskii appears out of the blizzard, Anna has one of her hands out of her muff, outstretched to take hold of the car handle: “Она вздохнула еще раз, чтобы надышаться, и уже вынула руку из муфты, чтобы взяться за столбик и войти в вагон, как еще человек в военном пальто подле нее самой заслонил ей колеблющийся свет фонаря” (18:109). Anna’s hand—already out of her muff and not yet holding the post—remains in midair throughout the conversation as Vronskii professes his passion for her. Although Anna outwardly hesitates, and even begs Vronskii to stop his pursuit, his confession inwardly delights her: “Он сказал то самое, чего желала ее душа, но чего она боялась рассудком” (18:109). Anna’s idle, empty hand reflects her inner receptiveness to his confession, producing the impression that the hand is not only vacant but *available*—for Vronskii, it seems. When Anna finally takes hold of the post and enters the car, she feels that the brief encounter has brought her significantly closer to Vronskii: “И, *взявшись рукой за холодный столбик*, она поднялась на ступеньки и быстро вошла в сени вагона. ... Не вспоминая ни своих, ни его слов, она чувством поняла, что этот минутный разговор страшно сблизил их” (emphasis added; 18:110). Although they do not actually touch in the scene, their intimate conversation and Anna’s vacant hand in midair anticipate their future touch, in intimacy as their passion evolves.

Portraying Anna and Vronskii’s touch, Tolstoi demonstrates that physical contact during their affair is constantly interrupted. The Russian word for an “affair” is “связь,” as in the quote above (“мы именно шли навстречу до связи”), which also means “connection” or “link.” Tolstoi is consistent in showing that Anna and Vronskii’s carnal love is unstable, severing their

emotional and consequently physical “connection.” Anna’s alienation from Vronskii begins as early in their romance as their first consummation of passion. Instead of deepening their emotional connection, their intimate touch results in their emotional alienation, which, in turn, is reflected in severed touch. Unlike Vronskii, Anna feels profoundly guilty after making love with him: “Она чувствовала себя столь преступною и виноватою, что ей оставалось только унижаться и просить прощения ... Она, глядя на него [Вронского], физически чувствовала свое унижение и ничего больше не могла говорить. [...] Стыд пред духовною наготою своей давил ее и сообщался ему” (18:158). When Anna anticipates their lovemaking, the act of sex itself incites contradictory feelings—her delight is admixed with shame (“в эту минуту не могла выразить словами того чувства стыда, радости и ужаса пред этим вступлением в новую жизнь” 18:158). Her physical “nakedness” makes her feel “naked” spiritually. Although Vronskii seems able to *sense* Anna’s shame (“стыд ... сообщался ему”) and even to pity her (“Лицо ее было всё так же красиво, но тем более было оно жалко” 18:158), he himself feels neither shame nor guilt for her seduction. He is astonished by Anna’s distress, not understanding its cause. He refers to their relationship, now consummated, as his “life” and highest “happiness” (“— Я не могу не помнить того, что есть моя жизнь. За минуту этого счастья...” 18:158), whereas Anna does not share his excitement (“— Какое счастье! — с отвращением и ужасом сказала она [...]” 18:158).

Anna’s shame prevents her from lightheartedly enjoying sexual relations with Vronskii, alienating her not only on an emotional but also on a haptic level. Depicting Anna’s interactions with Vronskii after intercourse, Tolstoi repeats twice that Anna feels that she has no one but Vronskii in the world—first in the narrator’s voice, and then in Anna’s own a bit later in the scene: “а в жизни теперь, кроме его, у ней никого не было” (18:157), “[у] меня ничего нет,

кроме тебя” (18:158). Tolstoi associates Anna’s gesture with each of these statements. Anna holds and kisses Vronskii’s hand in the first episode: “Она держала его руку и не шевелилась. Да, эти поцелуи — то, что куплено этим стыдом. Да, и эта одна рука, которая будет всегда моею, — рука моего сообщника. Она подняла эту руку и поцеловала ее” (18:157). Her kiss expresses the feeling that Vronskii is her only possession in the world. The second episode reveals Anna’s alienation, which is expressed not verbally but haptically. Anna pushes Vronskii away immediately before saying that she has no one but him: “как бы сделав усилие над собой, она поднялась и *оттолкнула* его” (18:158). Psychologically, Anna’s pushing Vronskii away reflects the despair and determination of accepting her new, despicable role as a fallen woman (as she apparently views it, given her shame). However, a haptic reading of the episode also suggests that, when Anna pushes Vronskii away while verbally reaffirming their bond, the gesture reflects her estrangement from her lover—which, according to Tolstoi, is inherent in the nature of carnal love.

Associating Vronskii with his *hand* (“а в жизни теперь, кроме его, у ней никого не было [...] *эта одна* рука, которая всегда будет моею” emphasis added; 18:158), Tolstoi underscores the carnal rather than spiritual nature of Anna and Vronskii’s love. Tolstoi uses a similar phrasing when describing Levin’s loved one, Kitty, also as “the only one” in the world, but he associates Kitty with her *eyes* (“Только *одни* на свете были *эти глаза*. Только одно было на свете существо, способное сосредоточивать для него весь свет и смысл жизни” (emphasis added; 18:292). By contrasting “hand” to “eyes”—the “lower” tactile and the “higher” visual senses according to Plato’s and Aristotle’s hierarchies—Tolstoi contrasts Anna’s carnal and Levin’s spiritual loves. While Levin and Kitty’s love eventually binds them together in a

happy marriage, even if instances of misunderstanding sometimes cause temporary upset, Anna and Vronskii's passion fails to do so, alienating them ever further in the course of their affair.

Unlike Levin and Kitty's temporary disagreements, Anna and Vronskii's arguments only generate further conflicts, even if they achieve a brief reconciliation. The failure to achieve harmony in their relationship is reflected in their interrupted touch. For instance, despite their shared wish to live as one family, Anna and Vronskii remain insensitive to one another's needs and feelings, sometimes unable and other times unwilling to yield. Vronskii's inability to empathize with Anna's concerns about her status and her son's fate in case of divorce undermines their physical contact, as in the scene where Vronskii visits Anna after she recovers from her post-partum fever. Anna and Vronskii's reunion begins with an exchange of passionate caresses, expressing their shared joy to see one another. When Vronskii runs into Anna's room, embraces her, and kisses her face, hands, and neck, she responds to his caresses by pressing his hand to her chest and embracing his head:

И не думая и не замечая того, есть кто в комнате или нет, он обнял ее и стал покрывать поцелуями ее лицо, руки и шею. [...]

— Да, ты овладел мною, и я твоя, — выговорила она наконец, прижимая к своей груди его руку. [...]

— Это правда, — говорила она, бледнея всё более и более и обнимая его голову. (18:457)

Their touch even becomes simultaneous and reciprocal when Anna takes Vronskii's hand and moves it to stroke her hair and cheeks: "И она не могла не ответить улыбкой — не словам, а влюбленным глазам его. Она взяла его руку и гладила ею себя по похолодевшим щекам и обстриженным волосам" (18:457). In keeping with Merleau-Ponty, Anna and Vronskii's touching while being touched suggests an instance of corporeal "intertwinement," reflecting their emotional unity as they seek to live together as a family:

— Неужели это возможно, чтобы мы были как муж с женою, одни, своею семьей с тобой? — сказала она, близко вглядываясь в его глаза.

— Меня только удивляло, как это могло быть когда-нибудь иначе. (18:457)

However, Anna cannot completely yield to the dream of togetherness in the same, lighthearted way that Vronskii does. She cannot think solely of Vronskii and their love, because she is concerned with her husband's decision about her and her son. Anna's worry, which Vronskii does not share, results in emotional withdrawal. Tolstoi shows Anna's retreat through her gaze and touch. Pondering her divorce and the fate of her son, Anna looks past Vronskii's face while apparently holding his hand. Instead of showing empathy and support, Vronskii tries to divert Anna's attention away from concerns about Karenin and Serēzha and redirect it to their union, asking Anna *not* to think about her husband and son while turning her hand in his. Anna remains unresponsive to his touch, continuing to look past him:

— Стива говорит, что он на всё согласен, но я не могу принять его великодушие, — сказала она, задумчиво глядя мимо лица Вронского. — Я не хочу развода, мне теперь всё равно. Я не знаю только, что он решит об Сереже.

Он не мог никак понять, как могла она в эту минуту свиданья думать и помнить о сыне, о разводе. Разве не всё равно было?

— Не говори про это, не думай, — сказал он, поворачивая ее руку в своей и стараясь привлечь к себе ее внимание; но она всё не смотрела на него. (18:457–58)

Both Anna's burden of an uncertain fate and Vronskii's insensitivity to her distress cause an emotional gap between them, interrupting their touch's reciprocity. Just as in the case with Kitty, Anna's touch with Vronskii does not reflect their emotional unity but rather highlights the absence thereof—expressed in Anna's distracted gaze and unresponsive hand, insensitive to Vronskii's touch.

Society's unequal treatment of male and female infidelity complicates Anna and Vronskii's relationship and aggravates the tension between them. While society rejects Anna for leaving her husband, publicly acknowledging her unfaithfulness and tainting her reputation, it

willingly accepts Vronskii. Tolstoi describes Anna and Vronskii's opposing positions in society haptically, referring to hands: society's *hands* are raised for Vronskii but are immediately lowered to Anna, indicating that society is willing to greet (shake hands with) Vronskii but not Anna. "[X]отя свет был открыт для него лично, он был закрыт для Анны. Как в игре в кошку-мышку, руки, поднятые для него, тотчас же опускались пред Анной" (19:100). Society's hands, "closed", reveal the gap between Anna and her wider peer group. For instance, her appearance at the opera is such a scandal that a couple occupying the adjacent box decides to leave, finding it inappropriate even to sit close to Anna. Vronskii, in turn, is unwilling to give up his social freedom for her, as he thinks elsewhere in the novel: "«...Во всяком случае я всё могу отдать ей, но не свою мужскую независимость», думал он" (19:221). Vronskii's unchanged position in society incites her irritation, her jealousy of his social freedom, and her fear of losing him.

Anna's irritation and jealousy alienate her from Vronskii. Her nagging requests for reassurance of his love trigger his resentment and interrupt their physical contact, as, for instance, in the episode wherein Anna briefly meets with Vronskii at the hotel after visiting her son on his birthday. Having lost her son, Anna is gripped with the fear of losing Vronskii as well. When Vronskii is about to leave the hotel with his friend Yashvin for another social event, Anna tries to hold him back, at least to ask if he still loves her even though he cannot stay. Anna begins by showing tenderness to Vronskii, which is willingly reciprocated: when Anna takes Vronskii's hand and presses it to her neck, he responds with a kiss on her hand. However, when Anna asks Vronskii if he still loves her, pressing his hand between both of hers in supplication, Vronskii responds to her kindly but pulls his hand away:

Она взяла его за руку и, не спуская глаз, смотрела на него, отыскивая в мыслях, что бы сказать, чтоб удержать его.

— Пойдем, мне кое-что надо сказать, — и, взяв его короткую руку, она прижала ее к своей шее. — Да, ничего, что я позвала его [Яшвина; Yashvin is Vronskii's friend who visits Anna with Vronskii] обедать?

— Прекрасно сделала, — сказал он со спокойною улыбкой, открывая свои сплошные зубы и целуя ее руку.

— Алексей, ты не изменился ко мне? — сказала она, обеими руками сжимая его руку. — Алексей, я измучалась здесь. Когда мы уедем?

— Скоро, скоро. Ты не поверишь, как и мне тяжела наша жизнь здесь, — сказал он и потянул свою руку. (19:112–13)

Anna's pressing of Vronskii's hand with both of her own demonstrates not only the power of her emotion but also the intensity of her desire to keep Vronskii by her side. Vronskii feels responsible for Anna's misfortune and is faithful despite his social liberties, so her incessant doubt irritates and repulses him. That he pulls his hand away, interrupting their touch while gently responding to Anna's words, reflects his inner alienation from Anna. He politely tolerates her jealousy but feels insulted and averted. Tolstoi shows that carnal love creates social and interpersonal dynamics encouraging Anna's ungrounded jealousy, which fragments the couple's emotional unity and divides the couple's hands. Under similar circumstances, when Kitty finds herself attracted to the corrupted Vaseen'ka Veslovskii, she is tormented by her attraction, begging Levin to forgive her and to make Veslovskii leave their home. Thus, she eliminates her attraction and the source of Levin's jealousy, restoring their harmonious relationship.

Even when Anna and Vronskii manage to achieve a moment of unity, it inevitably proves to be fleeting. The haptic interactions during their last argument before Anna's suicide reveal their inability to sustain a union. Although Vronskii undergoes a kind of inner transformation,¹⁸ sacrificing his career for Anna and becoming more empathetic and compassionate with her, she again suspects his infidelity—as so often in this stage of their relationship. She both suffers herself and torments her lover. Anna particularly distrusts Vronskii's relations with Princess

¹⁸ I discuss Vronskii's inner transformation and the way in which Tolstoi communicates it through his haptic experiences in the chapter on Vronskii.

Sorokina, whom his mother intends for marriage to her son. When Vronskii tells Anna that he needs to see his mother in order to obtain money, delaying their departure from Moscow to his estate, Anna breaks into tears, humiliated, both blaming herself for burdening Vronskii and at the same time accusing him of loving another woman: “— Брось меня, брось! — выговаривала она между рыданиями. — Я уеду завтра... Я больше сделаю. Кто я? развратная женщина. Камень на твоей шее. Я не хочу мучать тебя, не хочу! Я освобожу тебя. Ты не любишь, ты любишь другую!” (19:324).

Though Anna tries to hurt Vronskii, he consoles her, reassuring her that the jealousy is unfounded and hurts her as much as it hurts him. Saying this, he kisses Anna’s hands: “— Анна, за что так мучать себя и меня? — говорил он, целуя ее руки” (19:324). Vronskii’s inclusive phrasing as he says that Anna’s jealousy torments *both* of them (“себя и меня”) suggests his genuine care for Anna as well as himself, thus revealing his efforts to bridge her alienation and consolidate their unity. His kiss (touch) on Anna’s hands corroborates his verbal efforts to connect. Tolstoi shows that, since Vronskii sincerely cares not only for himself but also for Anna, he manages to reach out to her. When he talks to her and kisses her hands, Anna reads the tenderness in his expression, seeming to both *hear* the tears in his voice and *feel* their moisture on her hand: “В лице его теперь выражалась нежность, и ей казалось, что она слышала ухом звук слез в его голосе и на руке своей чувствовала их влагу” (19:325). Whether or not Vronskii cries during this scene (which Tolstoi does not reveal), the fact that Anna feels the sensations left by his tears, whether real or illusory, suggests that she is responsive both emotionally and haptically. Thus, Vronskii has managed to reach out to her, thereby bridging the alienation between them.

Vronskii's confirmation of his love for Anna reunites them, also conveyed through touch. Vronskii's tenderness transforms Anna's jealousy into passion, so she reciprocates his touch with amorous caresses. She embraces him, kissing his head, neck, and hands: "И мгновенно отчаянная ревность Анны перешла в отчаянную, страстную нежность; она обнимала его, покрывала поцелуями его голову, шею, руки" (19:325). Anna and Vronskii's reciprocal touch suggests their reestablished bond, reflecting their temporary reconciliation. They stop fighting and willingly yield to one another's wishes throughout the evening:

Чувствуя, что примирение было полное, Анна с утра оживленно принялась за приготовление к отъезду. Хотя и не было решено, едут ли они в понедельник или во вторник, так как оба вчера уступали один другому, Анна деятельно приготавливалась к отъезду, чувствуя себя теперь совершенно равнодушной к тому, что они уедут днем раньше или позже. (19:325)

Anna and Vronskii's reconciliation ends the chapter, producing the impression that they have overcome their alienation definitively. However, the next chapter reveals that the reconciliation is only temporary. Thus, the break between the chapters anticipates the break in their reunion, and the break in their touch. When, the next morning, Vronskii mentions his departure to his mother's, Anna feels "stung" ("кольнуло"): "Как ни хорошо она была настроена, упоминание о поездке на дачу к матери кольнуло ее" (19:325). On the one hand, Vronskii does not give up his intention to visit his mother, though he knows from their conversation the day before that it upsets Anna. On the other hand, Anna does not trust Vronskii even after their reconciliation. Vronskii's visit to his mother re-awakens Anna's insecurity and jealousy, leading her to feel hurt. Anna further misinterprets Vronskii's words, accusing him of indifference. When he discusses Anna's divorce, expressing care for Anna and for their future children, Anna mishears him, convinced that he only cares about the children and not about her. She provokes an argument, responding to Vronskii with spiteful reprimands and hurting him so

much that he winces in pain: “— Ах, я сказал: для тебя. Более всего для тебя, — морщась, точно от боли, повторил он, — потому что я уверен, что большая доля твоего раздражения происходит от неопределенности положения” (19:327). Anna seeks to hurt Vronskii in order to avenge the pain that she believes he has caused.

As was previously discussed, Merleau-Ponty’s notion of ideal unity merged into an “intercorporeal” whole suggests that, by hurting one another, each being of the intercorporeal whole hurts itself as well. Though Tolstoi does not portray actual, physical touch in the scene, his references to Anna’s “sting” and Vronskii’s “wince” of “pain” can be read as haptic elements. While love and genuine care temporarily “intertwine” Anna and Vronskii, Vronskii’s unwillingness to forgo the visit to his mother and Anna’s jealousy, fueling resentment and misinterpretation, drive their entwinement apart. This separation hurts both parties at the instant of division, expressed through the haptic elements of pain.

Anna’s resentment for Vronskii leads her to read repulsion in his attitude towards her body. When the two sit down to coffee, after their argument about Princess Sorokina but before Vronskii’s departure, Anna catches his gaze and reads what she perceives as disgust. It seems to her that her hand, her gestures, and the sound that she makes with her lips as she drinks repulse him: “Она подняла чашку, отставив мизинец, и поднесла ее ко рту. Отпив несколько глотков, она взглянула на него и по выражению его лица ясно поняла, что ему противны были рука, и жест, и звук, который она производила губами” (19:328). Since the scene is portrayed from Anna’s point of view, it is unclear whether Vronskii is truly averse to Anna’s body, or if his disgust is only a figment of her confused mind. While she believes her judgment of Vronskii to be accurate (“ясно поняла/understood *clearly*”; emphasis added), this already anticipates the distortion of Anna’s sensory perceptions and moral judgments in the scenes

preceding her suicide, when she is disoriented and sees corruption and hatred in all people.

Whether Anna's judgment is correct or not, her interpretation of Vronskii's gaze aggravates their alienation. Anna retaliates against his presumed disgust for her body with loathing for his hands. She associates them (and thus his body as well) solely with his sensuality. She recalls his passionate caresses from the evening before, and imagines how those hands have caressed and (she believes) will caress other women besides her: "Пристально глядя на него, на его лицо, руки, она вспоминала со всеми подробностями сцену вчерашнего примирения и его страстные ласки. «Эти, точно такие же ласки он расточал и будет и хочет расточать другим женщинам!» думала она" (19:328). The sensual nature that had initially brought them together now repulses Anna, as do the hands. Anna's jealousy undermines not only their emotional relationship but also her physical attraction, transforming it to disgust. Her lover's body now repulses her, just as her husband's body with "moist" hands and "big swollen veins" had repulsed her earlier. Anna's disdain reveals the unbridgeable gap of repulsion, which, Tolstoi demonstrates, is inherent in carnal love. Anna's passion repelled her from her husband's body, and now repels her even from her lover's.

Since Tolstoi represents carnal love as a force of discord and alienation, he shows how Anna's passion leads to the escalating anxiety and madness of her suicide. Anna's haptic recollections in the scenes preceding her death recapitulate her inner struggle, revealing her passion's destructive effects on her emotional, mental, moral, and physical states. Anna's haptic memory manifests itself for the first time in a scene after an argument with Vronskii and before her carriage ride to the train station. Vronskii leaves the house, and Anna, afraid that he has abandoned her, sends a note and waits for his return. Addled by opium, Anna looks at herself in the mirror but cannot immediately recognize her form. When she does, she suddenly *feels*

Vronskii's kisses covering her body: «Кто это?» — думала она, глядя в зеркало на воспаленное лицо со странно блестящими глазами, испуганно смотревшими на нее. «Да это я», — вдруг поняла она, и, оглядывая себя всю, она почувствовала вдруг на себе его поцелуи...» (19:335). The way in which the phantom sensation surfaces on Anna's skin once she recognizes her reflection is consistent with Montagu's notion of skin as the outer layer of a person's ego. Anna's skin reflects her identity (as the mirror reflects her appearance)—now reduced to Vronskii's kisses, i.e., to her passion.

The hallucinatory kisses disturb Anna, so she tries to shake them off with a shrug of her shoulders. But, she involuntarily kisses her own hand instead, as if reiterating the very kiss she is trying to erase: "... и, содрогаясь, двинула плечами. Потом подняла руку к губам и поцеловала ее" (19:335). The way in which Anna tries to shake off Vronskii's phantom kisses reverberates with a previously-discussed scene, wherein Anna talks to Stiva and shakes her head to escape disturbing thoughts of Vronskii. In both scenes, Anna fails to free herself. Instead, her passion escalates throughout the novel, developing from brief, troubling thoughts into physical sensation: first the sensation of Karenin's kiss on her hand, and then sensations covering her entire body. Anna's involuntary kiss on her own hand suggests the imposing nature of her passion, which seems to have taken control over both her body and her personality. Anna thinks of herself first and foremost as a lover, who only desires Vronskii's caresses, who cannot and does not want to have any other identity: "Если б я могла быть чем-нибудь, кроме любовницы, страстно любящей одни его ласки; но я не могу и не хочу быть ничем другим" 19:343).

Although Anna has come to identify herself only with her passion, other haptic recollections suggest that her ordinary (innocent and moral) self persists in her personality—

although it eventually fails to restore Anna's clear perception and judgment, distorted by passion for Vronskii. When Anna goes to see Dolly after the mirror episode, the passing shop signs and the very experience of travelling in a carriage trigger a chain of associations that recover the distant memory of travelling to Trinity Monastery when she was a virginal seventeen-year-old girl:

Сидя в углу покойной коляски, чуть покачивавшейся своими упругими рессорами на быстром ходу серых, Анна, при несмолкаемом грохоте колес и быстро сменяющихся впечатлениях на чистом воздухе, вновь перебирая события последних дней, увидала свое положение совсем иным, чем каким оно казалось ей дома. Теперь и мысль о смерти не казалась ей более так страшна и ясна, и самая смерть не представлялась более неизбежною. [...] Филиппов, калачи. Говорят, что они возят тесто в Петербург. Вода московская так хороша. А Мытищенские колодцы и блины». И она вспомнила, как давно, давно, когда ей было еще семнадцать лет, она ездила с теткой к Троице. «На лошадях еще. Неужели это была я, с красными руками? Как многое из того, что тогда мне казалось так прекрасно и недоступно, стало ничтожно, а то, что было тогда, теперь навеки недоступно. (19:336–37)

According to Paterson's classification of the kinds of haptic perception, the experience of travelling in a carriage, with its rocking motions and the movements through space that Tolstoi describes in the quote above ("чуть покачивавшейся своими упругими рессорами на быстром ходу серых," "быстро сменяющихся впечатлениях"), qualifies as proprioceptive. Although Anna's recollection seems to be most immediately triggered by reading the shop signs, the *carriage ride* (thus her proprioceptive perception) underlies the memory, since a stream of associations brings back her memory of *another* carriage ride. In addition, her movement through space along the shops and streets seems to structure her train of thought, setting her on a *temporal* journey to recover her past as her present carriage trip evokes a past one. In other words, Anna's spatial journey, which transforms into a temporal journey, suggests the continuity of her identity. Although Anna herself concludes that her purity is lost irrevocably ("навек недоступно"), the mere memory of past purity temporarily improves her mental state. Anna

resolves to confess her distress to Dolly, to leave Vronskii, and, following Dolly's advice, to start her life anew ("Да, я скажу Долли всё. Она не любит Вронского. Будет стыдно, больно, но я всё скажу ей. Она любит меня, и я последую ее совету. ... [Я] войду к Долли и прямо скажу ей: я несчастна, я стою того, я виновата, но я всё-таки несчастна, помоги мне" 18:336–37). Anna's mental journey to her innocent past, encouraging her to start a new life without Vronskii, suggests that Tolstoi portrays Anna's lost purity as something not necessarily irrevocable. Even if Anna cannot restore her youthful innocence, she can potentially live a moral life—a life not controlled by passion.

On the one hand, the above flux in Anna's mood from desperate to hopeful seems to be but a momentary instance in her stream of disorderly thoughts, reflecting her fluctuating emotional and mental state.¹⁹ On the other hand, Tolstoi associates such fluctuations in Anna's mood with her physical sensations, suggesting that such instances can be fruitfully read and better understood through haptic theory. As discussed in the chapter on the haptic, Bergson and Proust believe that sensory memory connects a person's past to present, ensuring the continuity facilitating the wholeness of his identity. For Bergson, a person literally relives his past when he repeats the same learned physical action, such as reciting a poem, for instance. For Proust, sensory memory is not only a means of restoring a person's wholeness but also a source of transformation. Proust's protagonist recovers his past after he tastes a madeleine cake. The recollection of his youth triggered by the sensation not only helps him feel reconnected with his seemingly lost past but also fosters a creative impulse, transforming him from a common, "accidental," "mediocre" "mortal" (54) into a writer. Through his creative imagination, the

¹⁹ For instance, the final fluctuation in Anna's mood, when she suddenly comes to her senses after throwing herself on the rails and wishes to save herself, is not associated with Anna's haptic memory. It is an example of her shifting moods, reflecting her confused emotional and mental state.

protagonist-writer not only can revive his past, but can also trace the continuity of his life from the past into the present. As in case of Bergson's and Proust's subjects, Anna's haptic recollections reflect her identity. Vronskii's kisses on Anna's body, which involuntarily surface on her skin, reflect her presently obsessive desire. Her two carriage rides bridge the present, where she feels corrupted by her passion, with the past, where she was young and innocent. The fact that Anna's haptic memory brings back the recollections associated with past innocence as well as present corruption suggests that, in keeping with Bergson and Proust, the whole of Anna's identity includes both aspects of her personality. The difference between the ways in which sensory recollections affect Proust's and Tolstoi's protagonists highlights Tolstoi's anxiety over human sexuality. While the youthful recollections of Proust's protagonist lead to his transformation, Anna's recollections of her past enable only momentary fluctuation in her otherwise confused and depressed mental state, consistent with Tolstoi's representation of Anna's unleashed sexuality as a destructive force.

An episode immediately before Anna's suicide demonstrates another instance when Anna's haptic memory brings forth the uncorrupted aspect of her personality, but fails to overcome her determination to commit suicide. When Anna is ready to throw herself under the train, the movement of stepping down from the platform reminds her of entering a pool of water, and she habitually crosses herself. Crossing oneself before entering a pool of water is a widespread Russian cultural custom, which Anna must have adopted as a child. Even though Anna is not seeking help through religion, the gesture itself seems to be imbued with an independently powerful, spiritual meaning, and it temporarily improves Anna's mental state—as did the recollections of her youthful innocence. Anna suddenly recalls her life, with all its past joys:

Чувство, подобное тому, которое она испытывала, когда купаясь готовилась войти в воду, охватило ее, и она перекрестилась. Привычный жест крестного знамения вызвал в душе ее целый ряд девичьих и детских воспоминаний, и вдруг мрак, покрывавший для нее всё, разорвался, и жизнь предстала ей на мгновение со всеми ее светлыми прошедшими радостями. (19:348)

Anna's joyful recollections immediately before her suicide not only endow the scene with dramatic tension, but also emphasize the controlling and obsessive nature of her passion.

Although Anna had wished to start her life anew (in the above episode) and sees her life in a brighter, happier tint (in the current episode), her passion prevails. She ultimately acts according to her previous decision to commit suicide in order to take revenge on Vronskii, making him responsible for her death. Anna's haptic recollections suggest that, although Anna's sensual self has not completely erased the uncorrupted aspect of her personality, its control is so powerful that Anna finds herself unable to resist the urge for revenge and suicide. As Anna recalls the joyous instances of her life, she nonetheless continues watching the train carefully and throws herself between the cars when the gap is in front of her.

Tolstoi describes Anna's death through tactile sensations, with visual stimulus deliberately suppressed. After she throws herself under the train, she feels that "something" "huge" and "implacable" pushes at her head and drags over her back: "[о]на хотела подняться, откинуться; но что-то огромное, неумолимое толкнуло ее в голову и потащило за спину" (19:348). Tolstoi describes the scene from Anna's point of view, capturing what she feels in the instant before her death. Using the indefinite pronoun "что-то/something" instead of the noun "train," which would describe the object definitively, thus supplying a clear visual image, Tolstoi introduces ambiguity, creating the impression that the "huge" and "implacable" object is unseen, only experienced tactilely as it "pushes" and "drags" Anna's body. Also, in comparison to the previous version of the novel, which had been published in a literary journal *Russkii vestnik* in

1875–76, Tolstoi deletes two sentences depicting Anna’s visual experiences. In the earlier version, Tolstoi describes Anna seeing the “dirty sand and coal” coming “closer” to her face immediately before she falls on the ground (“Ближе стали видны грязный песок и уголь. Она упала на них лицом” [19:468]). By deleting these sentences from the final version of the novel, Tolstoi leaves only the depiction of Anna’s tactile sensations. Since the sense of touch is the major medium of sensuality, that Anna’s death is described as a tactile experience reiterates the notion that her death originated with indulgence in carnal experience, or, in other words, with “touch.”

In the representation of Nikolai Levin’s death, which can be viewed as a parallel scene, Tolstoi depicts Nikolai’s passing as a spiritual as well as physical experience. The instant before Nikolai dies, his face is illuminated and his lips form a smile, suggesting inner peace: “И через минуту лицо просветлело, под усами выступила улыбка, и собравшиеся женщины озабоченно принялись убирать покойника” (19:74). In keeping with Plato’s association of vision/light with clarity of perception and true knowledge, Tolstoi’s reference to the light on Nikolai’s face (if only in a figurative sense) suggests his spiritual insight that he gains in death. In addition, the light imagery when Nikolai’s face is “illuminated” suggests the reflection of a spiritual experience in his physical body. That Kitty learns about her pregnancy immediately after Nikolai’s death, leading to Tolstoi’s meditation on both death and birth being gateways into the spiritual realm, corroborates the notion that Nikolai’s death is spiritual as well as physical.

While Nikolai’s death ends by *engendering* light, Anna’s death ends by *extinguishing* light: “И свеча, при которой она читала исполненную тревог, обманов, горя и зла книгу, вспыхнула более ярким, чем когда-нибудь, светом, осветила ей всё то, что прежде было во мраке, затрещала, стала меркнуть и навсегда потухла” (19:350). Although Anna “sees” a

“candle” illuminating the “book of her life,” the light goes out—just as the flash of “red fire” in Anna’s dream, incited by desire, had culminated in complete darkness during her train ride to Saint Petersburg. In keeping with Plato’s association of vision/light with mind/spirit, the light that illuminates the book of Anna’s life suggests that she is experiencing some spiritual insight. However, since Anna only reads anxieties, deceits, evil, and sorrows in the book of her life, and excludes the joyful moments that she had recalled before throwing herself under the train, the light imagery seems to tell of her distorted perception rather than of her heightened understanding. Thus, Anna’s final vision is not a spiritual insight but rather the figment of confusion.

Finally, Tolstoi depicts Anna’s eyes as open but, of course, unseeing after her death. When Vronskii finds her disfigured dead body spread out on the table at the station, he reads a reproach to him in the frozen expression of her half-open lips and her “unclosed” eyes: “застывшее странное, жалкое в губках и ужасное в *остановившихся незакрытых глазах*, выражение, как бы словами выговаривавшее то страшное слово — о том, что он раскается, — которое она во время ссоры сказала ему” (emphasis added; 19:362). In keeping with Plato’s light/vision metaphor, Anna’s open but unseeing eyes suggest her ultimate descent into the realm of the corporeal and away from the spiritual, foreshadowed in her delirious dream during the train ride to Saint Petersburg.

As Gutkin points out in the quote mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, in Tolstoi, just as in Plato, “love of the body ... strives only to achieve an end” (92–93). Anna’s “love of the body”—her passion for Vronskii—overpowers her emotional attachment to her son and her moral restrictions, reducing her personality to her carnal urges. While the light imagery in Nikolai’s postmortem expression suggests a spiritual insight, Anna’s open but unseeing eyes

point to the elimination not only of life and thus intellectual abilities in her body, but also of the spiritual. In other words, such interpretation suggests that Anna's carnal desire leads to her becoming flesh without spirit, inanimate corporeality, underscoring Tolstoi's representation of Anna's sexuality as self-enclosed.

Furthermore, Tolstoi depicts Anna's postmortem facial expression from Vronskii's point of view. Since Vronskii is self-centered and is devoid of spiritual sensibility, his perception of Anna's death and interpretation of her expression are biased and reductive. He interprets Anna's expression from within the context of their last argument—as an act of vengeance, aimed at forcing him to repent for his insensitivity to Anna (“выражение, как бы словами выговаривавшее то страшное слово — о том, что он раскается” 19:362). Although Anna's wish to avenge the pain which Vronskii had caused her underlies her decision to commit suicide, she experiences a wide range of emotions, reflecting on her life's past joys and sorrows, between the moments when she makes the decision to commit suicide and actually dies under the wheels of the train. She also seems to experience an instant of clarity when she comes to her senses, finds herself on the rails, realizes that her death is imminent, and asks God to forgive her for “everything” (“И в то же мгновение она ужаснулась тому, что делала. «Где я? Что я делаю? Зачем?» Она хотела подняться, откинуться; но что-то огромное, неумолимое толкнуло ее в голову и потащило за спину. «Господи, прости мне всё!» проговорила она, чувствуя невозможность борьбы” 19:348–49). It is true that it is unclear what Anna exactly means by “everything”: for instance, does she repent of her passion for Vronskii, or does she still consider it to be a manifestation of her “God-given” sensual nature, as she claims earlier? In either case, Vronskii's self-absorption prevents him from viewing Anna's death as an event more significant than a mere act of revenge to him. Since Vronskii—unlike Levin, who is able to see his brother's

spiritual insight in his postmortem expression—is carnal and is insensitive to spiritual questions, he is preoccupied only with Anna’s physical state, searching for signs of recent beauty in her crushed body. Her spiritual life (and one can add, afterlife) remains beyond the scope of Vronskii’s earth- and self-bound concerns. Vronskii’s biased and limited point of view, which cannot do justice to Anna’s complex personality and rich inner life, reflects the reductive nature of carnal love, which takes control over Anna’s personality, reducing her, as she herself reflects, to a lover who loves only Vronskii’s caresses (“любовницы, страстно любящей одни его ласки; но я не могу и не хочу быть ничем другим” 19:343).

In addition, the fact that Anna, unlike Nikolai Levin, dies alone and the only loved one who comes to see Anna after her death (at least within the framework of the novel) is Vronskii, who is, strictly speaking, not a family member, reflects another trait of carnal love—its alienating force. The representation of Anna’s body after her death, and thus her experience of death, is limited to Vronskii’s point of view precisely because her passion has alienated her from other people, who could perhaps have highlighted her other roles apart from that of Vronskii’s lover (for instance, as a loving mother to her son, a caring sister to Stiva, and a friend to Dolly). Stiva recalls Anna later in a conversation with Serēzha, but only in passing, carefully asking him if he still remembers his mother. Although Serēzha does remember and love his mother, he hides his feelings because he misses his mother and realizes the futility of his feelings and recollections, since they cannot bring her back and he needs to get used to living with his father. Although both Anna’s brother and her son remember and love Anna, the person who witnesses Anna’s death expression and thus has a chance (but fails) to gain insight into her final emotions is her lover. While enriching her inner life and imbuing her personality with complexity, Anna’s passion proves limiting. Portraying Anna’s death through Vronskii’s perspective and reducing

her to a person who had been obsessed solely with passion and revenge, Tolstoi underscores the self-seeking and therefore alienating and reductive nature of carnal love.

4. Levin and Kitty²⁰

As the Tolstoi scholar Elisabeth Stenbock-Fermor argues, Tolstoi “disassociates the physical from the spiritual when the spiritual achieves its summit” (58). The scholar’s observation suggests that Tolstoi defines spiritual experience as incorporeal, something that occurs outside of the body and therefore does not engage haptic perception. Stenbock-Fermor’s observation echoes young Tolstoi’s description of losing the feeling of his corporeality when enraptured by prayer (“Я не чувствовал плоти, я был — один дух” (1851; 46:62)). It is true that Tolstoi contrasts Anna and Vronskii’s carnal love with Levin and Kitty’s spiritual (non-carnal) love throughout the novel. However, in contrasting the two couples, he does not exclude haptic (bodily) elements from the portrayal of Levin and Kitty’s non-carnal love. While associating sexual promiscuity with primarily cutaneous and tactile sensations, Tolstoi associates non-carnal love with kinesthetic perception (or, in other words, bodily dexterity), since it excludes direct physical contact between bodies. This chapter argues that Tolstoi uses kinesthetic perception to emphasize the purity of Levin and Kitty’s love and touch, which serves to unite them with one another, facilitates their interpersonal unities, and immerses Levin in the whole of the world.

²⁰ Other characters, discussed above, fragment relational unity (Stiva’s affair brings household discord, Vronskii’s pursuit of Anna interferes with her family, Anna’s passion for Vronskii alienates her from her husband, Karenin’s restrained emotionality undermines his relationship with Anna), but Levin and Kitty form a successful union. In addition, while other previously discussed characters each have distinct haptic experiences (Stiva indulges in sensory perceptions of mundane phenomena, Anna indulges in cutaneous and tactile sensations as her perception escalates and becomes distorted, Vronskii’s haptic experiences are self-directed, and Karenin is physically rigid), Levin and Kitty share similar sensory (haptic/kinesthetic and visual) experiences. Since Levin and Kitty’s unity is revealed through their sensory kinship, it seems fitting to discuss the two characters in a single chapter.

The juxtaposition between caress and dexterity is crucial to Aristotle's views on the sense of touch. The philosopher associates the touch of one's body/skin (especially, those parts of the body causing sexual arousal) with sexual excess and corruption. By contrast, he emphasizes that the dexterity of the human hand facilitates intellectual and moral abilities, thus elevating them above the animals. In other words, Aristotle distinguishes two forms of touch: touch for pleasure, and dexterity for development. According to Paterson's classification of haptic perception, bodily dexterity falls under the category of kinesthetic perception (which includes muscles, joints, movements, and the sense of balance, excluding the skin). Tolstoi's use of these two forms of haptic perception (cutaneous/tactile and kinesthetic) is consistent with Aristotle's. Although Levin and Kitty do touch each other throughout the novel, and even do so intimately, particularly after their marriage, their *distinctive* form of haptic perception is kinesthetic.

In keeping with Aristotle's conception of the hand's dexterity as a means of intellectual/spiritual development, Tolstoi emphasizes both Levin's and Kitty's mobility and dexterity. Both characters are actually introduced into the novel through movement, thus using their kinesthetic perception. One can say that Levin "runs" into the novel. Appearing for the first time in Stiva's office building, Levin does not simply walk in, but runs, quickly and easily climbing the stairs ("быстро и легко взбегал навверх" 18:19). Tolstoi seems to deliberately linger to highlight Levin's movements: Tolstoi contrasts Levin with an official who stops to look at the *legs* of the "*running* person" (emphasis added; "ноги бегущего" 18:19). Tolstoi even seems to associate Levin's identity with his mobility, as when Stiva recognizes the "вбегавший/running person" as Levin. In addition, Levin's "strong build" and "broad shoulders" confirm his penchant for robust movements (Stiva, in his typically sensual manner, admires his friend's strong muscles a few pages later, too):

Этот самый, — сказал сторож, указывая на сильно сложенного широкоплечего человека с курчавою бородой, который, не снимая бараньей шапки, быстро и легко взбегал вверх по стертым ступенькам каменной лестницы. Один из сходявших вниз с портфелем худощавый чиновник, приостановившись, неодобрительно посмотрел на ноги бегущего и потом вопросительно взглянул на Облонского.

Степан Аркадьич стоял над лестницей. Добродушно сияющее лицо его из-за шитого воротника мундира просияло еще более, когда он узнал вбегавшего. (18:19)

Levin's dynamism reflects his hard-working village lifestyle, which Tolstoi conveys through his manifestly village looks and manners ("человека с курчавою бородой," "не снимая бараньей шапки"). The fact that Tolstoi associates Levin's physical fitness with manual work and the world of nature, both of which he views as uncorrupted (see the chapter on Tolstoi's moral vision), one can infer that Tolstoi believes that kinesthetic perception is a morally proper way in which to interact with others and the world.

Kitty, too, is associated with movement as she is introduced. Although Kitty is first mentioned in the novel through Levin's recollections of her, Kitty appears in person as she skates at the rink. Describing Kitty's skating, Tolstoi mentions that she has a "springy" foot ("упругою ножкой" 18:32), perhaps evoking Levin's apparently strong and resilient "running legs" in the previous scene. In addition, Tolstoi reinforces the connection between Levin and Kitty through a reference to "village" life, mentioning that a young boy in traditional Russian (*village*) dress runs *dexterously* by Kitty: "Отчаянно махавший руками и пригибавшийся к земле мальчик в русском платье обгонял ее" (18:32).

Before Levin and Kitty properly meet, Tolstoi provides background for their relations to emphasize the inherently innocent nature of their associations, despite the sensual overtone that one discerns in Levin's thoughts of Kitty. First, Tolstoi evokes their childhood, a time of innocence, devoid of sensual stirrings—let alone crude sexuality. Levin has known Kitty since her childhood, and he was a close friend of her late brother. Though Levin is charmed by her

subtle physical beauty—her slender stature (“тонкой красотой стана”), slim legs, and springy foot (“узкие ножки в высоких ботинках,” “упругую ножкой”)—he particularly emphasizes her childish innocence. Her face has an expression of child-like clarity and kindness (“прелесть этой, с выражением детской ясности и доброты, небольшой белокурой головки,” “детскость выражения ее лица”). Her smile transports Levin to the marvelous world of his own early childhood, permeated with blissful peace (“ее улыбка, всегда переносившая Левина в волшебный мир, где он чувствовал себя умиленным и смягченным, каким он мог запомнить себя в редкие дни своего раннего детства”) (18:32–33).

Further, Tolstoi emphasizes that Levin sees Kitty not as an object of passion (as Vronskii views Anna) but as an ideal of purity, which he longs for emotionally rather than physically. According to Plato, the sense of vision and the light that it captures are associated with a person’s spiritual ascent. Consistent with Plato, Levin is particularly drawn to Kitty’s eyes, which he regards as meek and truthful (“выражение ее глаз, кротких, спокойных и правдивых”). In addition, her smile moves him to tenderness (“умиленный”). Both “кроткий/meek” and “умиленный/tender” are adjectives used in the Christian tradition to describe piety: “the meek (“кроткие” in Russian) ... inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5), and “умиленный” is one of the central images in the iconography of the Blessed Virgin (The Virgin of Tenderness, or *Panagia Eleousa* in Greek, or *Божия Матерь «Умиление»* in Russian). That the description of Kitty’s eyes evokes Christian imagery emphasizes not only Kitty’s own truthfulness and purity, but also Levin’s, since he is the one who regards her in this way.

In keeping with Plato, the sun and light imagery referenced in Levin’s vision of Kitty reinforce the notion that their bond is spiritual rather than carnal. Plato’s “cave” metaphor describes the final stage of spiritual ascent and the attainment of true knowledge of the world as

a gaze directly into the sun: “Last of all he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate him as he is” (207). Levin thinks of Kitty as a nearly sublime, incorporeal creature, and associates her with the sun in his imagination:

Он прошел еще несколько шагов, и пред ним открылся каток, и тотчас же среди всех катавшихся он узнал ее.

...Всё освещалось ею. Она была улыбка, озарявшая всё вокруг. ... Он сошел вниз, избегая подолгу смотреть на нее, как на солнце, но он видел ее, как солнце, и не глядя. (18:32)

In keeping with Plato’s “cave” metaphor, Tolstoi’s association of Kitty with the sun renders her an embodiment of spiritual truth. The way in which Levin gazes at Kitty as if gazing at the sun anticipates his spiritual quest and the discovery that Kitty is the only one who can answer his questions about life’s meaning and “mystery.” In other words, Kitty is the “sun,” in whose “light”—and through whose love—Levin will attain true knowledge.

Kitty and Levin’s haptic interactions at the skating rink anticipate both their temporary separation, caused by Kitty’s infatuation with Vronskii, and their future reunion. Vronskii’s nonchalant pursuit of Kitty introduces a temporary break in the development of her relationship with Levin; however, it does not break their bond. Tolstoi shows that, because of her infatuation with Vronskii, Kitty temporarily fails to recognize Levin as her true love, even though she does implicitly love him. Having noticed Levin, who is chatting with her cousin, Kitty begins to skate towards them with her arms outstretched (she is a poor skater). While skating, she keeps looking and smiling at Levin rather than her cousin, but once she approaches them, her hand lands on her cousin rather than Levin:

Она катилась не совсем твердо; вынув руки из маленькой муфты, висевшей о на снурке, она держала их наготове и, глядя на Левина, которого она узнала, улыбалась ему и своему страху. Когда поворот кончился, она дала себе толчок

упругую ножкой и подкатилась прямо к Щербацкому; и, ухватившись за него рукой, улыбаясь кивнула Левину. (18:32)

Kitty's outstretched arms while smiling at Levin produce the impression that she is actually stretching out to lean on *him*. It seems that only social norms do not allow Kitty to land on Levin instead.

Tolstoi reinforces the impression of their inherent bond and future unity by describing Kitty as a poor skater and Levin a dexterous one: “Она подала ему руку, и они пошли рядом, прибавляя хода, и, чем быстрее, тем крепче она сжимала его руку” (18:33). Kitty's leaning on Levin's arm (their touch) as they skate together makes *both* of them more confident: Kitty feels more secure in skating, and Levin gains confidence in himself. “— С вами я бы скорее выучилась, я почему-то уверена в вас, — сказала она ему. — И я уверен в себе, когда вы опираетесь на меня” (18:33). As they move faster, Kitty *unconsciously* presses Levin's hand, which suggests not only Kitty's fear of skating but also her unconscious trust in Levin (“я почему-то уверена в вас”) though she is currently infatuated with Vronskii. In addition, their apparently *well-coordinated* movements (kinesthetic perception) as they skate *together* and *touch* one another contribute to the impression of their inherent unity and anticipate this unity in the future.

Kitty's infatuation with Vronskii temporarily severs their bond (which otherwise seems to be growing, given that Kitty presses Levin's arm with an increasing strength). Tolstoi demonstrates their severed bond through their interrupted touch. When Levin hints at his love for Kitty, she immediately becomes alienated, severs their touch, and sends him away to see her governess Mlle Linon, who, she somewhat naughtily remarks, “loves” him:

И действительно, как только он произнес эти слова, вдруг, как солнце зашло за тучи, лицо ее утратило всю свою ласковость, и Левин узнал знакомую игру ее лица, означавшую усилие мысли: на гладком лбу ее вспухла морщинка. [...]

— Вы не видели М-лле Линон? ... Подите к ней, она так вас любит. (18:33)

Panicking, Levin alludes to his love again, but the reiterated confession alienates Kitty even further. Pretending not to hear, or truly not hearing, she taps her foot twice, as if stumbling, and skates away: “Не слыхала ли она его слов или не хотела слышать, но она как бы спотыкнулась, два раза стукнув ножкой, и поспешно покати́лась прочь от него” (18:35). Tolstoi’s depiction of her stumbling “как бы/as if” makes it unclear whether Kitty moves accidentally or on purpose, just as it is unclear whether she *does* not hear or does not *want* to hear Levin’s confession. Tolstoi’s ambiguity about Kitty’s behavior may reflect not only Levin’s uncertainty, but also Kitty’s own embarrassment and renewed frustration when Levin, whom she loves only as a friend, hints at his love for her again. Whether or not it is deliberate, Kitty’s stumbling counteracts their smooth and confident skating together, dissociating her from Levin and reflecting her temporary emotional estrangement from him. Kitty’s love for Vronskii severs not only their touch, as in the earlier episode, but also their synchronized movements.

However, despite skating away, Kitty in fact continues to look at Levin secretly from afar with evident sympathy, which suggests the internal connection against the backdrop of their physical alienation: “«Славный, милый», подумала Кити в это время, выходя из домика с М-лле Линон и глядя на него с улыбкой тихой ласки, как на любимого брата. [...] «...Я знаю, что я люблю не его; но мне всё-таки весело с ним, и он такой славный” (18:35–36). Kitty’s confusion between Vronskii’s pursuit and her implicit love for Levin are evident from her use of partitive negation: “she loves” but “not him”: “[я] знаю, что я люблю не его.” The partitive negation renders her expression as an affirmation (“я люблю/I love”) rather than a negation (“я не люблю/I don’t love”), anticipating her love for Levin in the future.

Kitty's partitive negation of her affection for Levin echoes her skating towards him and her cousin in the earlier-mentioned scene. While stretching out her arms towards her cousin, she keeps looking at Levin, and actually leans on his arm shortly thereafter when they skate together. One could say that Kitty loves (not) Levin, just as she skates (not) towards him. Kitty's *partitive* confession of her love for Levin, like her *partitive* skating in Levin's direction, anticipates the reunion after their separation.

Tolstoi emphasizes Kitty and Levin's internal connection even at the very moment when she is about to reject Levin's marriage proposal. As was previously discussed, Merleau-Ponty's theory suggests that two people entwined into a single "intercorporeal" whole should be able to feel one another's pain as their own. When Kitty decides to reject Levin, she realizes that her decision "concerns" ("касается," which in Russian also means "touches") Levin as well as herself. Although "touch" is suggested only indirectly, through Tolstoi's phrasing, it seems to be imbued with haptic meaning as well. The reference to "touch" ("касается") highlights Levin and Kitty's "intercorporeal" unity, which is evident from the context of the episode. Hurting Levin, Kitty seems to feel his pain, empathizes with him, and rejects him reluctantly, as if out of necessity: "Тут только она поняла, что вопрос касается не ее одной, — с кем она будет счастлива и кого она любит, — но что сию минуту она должна оскорбить человека, которого она любит. И оскорбить жестоко... За что? За то, что он, милый, любит ее, влюблен в нее. Но, делать нечего, так нужно, так должно" (18:51–52). Kitty seems to take Levin's position and judge her rejection from his point of view—as a cruel and painful insult, which he does not deserve ("оскорбить жестоко... За что?"). Their mutual love is the bond that connects them, so the pain that she is about to cause Levin hurts her as well. While she uses partitive negation to describe her feelings for Levin at the skating rink ("я люблю не его"

emphasis added; 18:36–36), she uses an affirmative statement when about to reject him (“она должна оскорбить человека, которого *она любит*” emphasis added; 18:51–52). Kitty’s susceptibility to Levin’s pain anticipates his susceptibility to Kitty’s, as Levin later feels that in hurting Kitty he hurts himself (discussed later in this chapter).

Although Tolstoi emphasizes Kitty’s innocence, she is not devoid of sensuality; this is captured not only through Levin’s vision of her but also through Kitty’s own haptic sensations. For all her innocence and truthfulness, Kitty is a young coquette, as she herself thinks at the skating rink: “«И неужели я виновата, неужели я сделала что-нибудь дурное? Они говорят: кокетство” 18:35–36). Kitty enjoys being the center of male admiration so much that she recognizes the powerful “intoxication” that Vronskii’s admiration arouses in Anna at the ball, since Kitty herself has apparently experienced it in the past: “Она [Кити] увидела в ней [Анне] столь знакомую ей самой черту возбуждения от успеха. Она видела, что Анна пьяна вином возбуждаемого ею восхищения. Она знала это чувство и знала его признаки и видела их на Анне” (18:86).

Tolstoi portrays Kitty’s sensuality through her cutaneous sensations as opposed to her kinesthetic perception. At the ball, Kitty enjoys a cold, marble-like feeling on her naked shoulders and arms: “В обнаженных плечах и руках Кити чувствовала холодную мраморность, чувство, которое она особенно любила” (18:83). Since Kitty perceives not an external phenomenon—for example, the chilly air that cools her skin—but her skin itself, the sensation appears to have an autoerotic quality. Her awareness of her own body reflects her awareness of her physical attractiveness.

Kitty’s autoerotic cold, cutaneous sensations, especially those compared with marble, seem to relate her to certain of Tolstoi’s other female characters, among whom cold, cutaneous

references suggest moral corruption. For instance, the reference to Kitty's naked skin and its marble coldness is reminiscent of Hélène Kuragina (*War and Peace*), whose skin Tolstoi describes as if made of cold and rigid marble. The stone associates her with an antique sculpture, conveying her physical rather than spiritual beauty, and is itself associated with her explicitly dissolute conduct and her morally degenerate personality. In "The Death of Ivan Il'ich," Ivan's daughter is also described as sensing her cold shoulders when she hurries off to a ball while ignoring her father's illness and suffering. Like Hélène, Kitty's sensations are marble-like, and like Ivan's daughter, the coldness in Kitty's shoulders is associated with attending a ball.

Nonetheless, despite haptic similarities with some of Tolstoi's morally corrupted females, and despite the parallel between Kitty's self-admiration and Anna's "intoxication," Kitty's autoerotic sensations are, in fact, innocent, just as is her sensuality. They can be seen as the manifestation of the "fire of life" within, which eventually leads her to marry Levin and give birth to their child. Indeed, elsewhere Tolstoi directly associates Kitty's awareness of her beauty and attractiveness with her "fire of life." Comparing Kitty to her kind but virtually asensual friend Varen'ka, whom she meets at a German spa, Tolstoi writes that men should not find Varen'ka attractive because she lacks what Kitty has in overabundance: the "self-awareness of her attractiveness" and the "concealed fire of life": "ей недоставало того, чего слишком много было в Кити — сдержанного огня жизни и сознания своей привлекательности" (18:227). Kitty's sensuality is inherently good because it urges her to create a family, something that Varen'ka eventually fails to do.

Kitty's physical illness after she non-verbally confesses her love for Vronskii at the ball can be interpreted as an expression of haptic memory, which corroborates her moral purity. Kitty's haptic memory is associated with a sense of guilt, as it is for the other characters, but the

manifestation of her haptic memory differs. Stiva ignores his sexual debauchery and only feels guilty for his inappropriate smile. While his entire body has participated in amoral activity, he only blames his relatively insignificant smile/mouth. The relative proportions of his fault (his body) and his guilt (his smile/mouth) suggest his limited moral sense. Vronskii experiences no guilt whatsoever: his leg, hurt in the race, evokes no recollection of his causing his horse's death. Anna's sense of guilt rightfully embraces her entire body (Vronskii's kisses on her skin), suggesting that her sense of guilt is equal to her "crime." This would seem to indicate that she has strong moral sense; however, that moral sense is distorted by her passion, and it destroys Anna instead of leading her to redemption. Unlike these characters, Kitty committed no moral "crime," but her entire body suffers, suggesting an *amplified* moral sense. Neither her older sister, Dolly, nor Varen'ka, considers Kitty's non-verbal love confession to be a crime. However, Kitty, because of her youthful inexperience *and* moral purity, judges and torments herself with guilt and shame. Kitty's loving gaze of Vronskii can hardly be considered a crime of the flesh, since no physical "fall" took place. Perhaps it is because her flesh is *uncorrupted* that she is susceptible to moral pangs *more* than the other, corrupted, characters.

Kitty *is* temporarily influenced by Varen'ka's selfless but dispassionate service to others. This allows Kitty to forget her past and facilitates her recovery from her illness. Kitty's physical and emotional recovery culminates in Prince Shcherbatskii's visit to the spa and the luxurious dinner in open air (nature) that he hosts. Although the abundance of food and merriment might remind one of Stiva's feasts, it does not suggest Shcherbatskii's moral corruption. To the contrary, Kitty's father's feast celebrates natural life, with its genuine vitality. The fact that Prince Shcherbatskii unites people in merriment with abundant treats, presents, and good cheer,

making even Varen'ka laugh (something Kitty has never seen before), reasserts the virtuousness of the event:

Под дрожащею кругами тенью листьев, у покрытого белою скатертью и уставленного кофейниками, хлебом, маслом, сыром, холодною дичью стола, сидела княгиня в наколке с лиловыми лентами, раздавая чашки и тартинки. На другом конце сидел князь, плотно кушая и громко и весело разговаривая. Князь разложил подле себя свои покупки, резные сундучки, бирюльки, разрезные ножики всех сортов, которых он накупил кучу на всех водах, и раздаривал их всем, в том числе Лисхен, служанке и хозяину, с которым он шутил на своем комическом дурном немецком языке, уверяя его, что не воды вылечили Кити, но его отличные кушанья, в особенности суп с черносливом. [...] и Варенька, чего еще Кити никогда не видала, раскисала от слабого, но сообщающегося смеха, который возбуждали в ней шутки князя. (18:246)

Although Kitty remains puzzled by the clash of the two worlds—her father's natural passion for life and Varen'ka's dispassionate and self-denying service ("Она не могла разрешить задачи, которую ей невольно задал отец своим веселым взглядом на ее друзей и на ту жизнь, которую она так полюбила" 18:246), she eventually breaks away from Varen'ka's lifestyle, as it is inconsistent with her inherently passionate personality.

Kitty's passionate nature and subsequent "breakup" with Varen'ka's lifestyle manifest themselves in interrupted, indirect touch during an incident involving an umbrella that takes place shortly after the feast. Kitty contrasts herself with Varen'ka, saying that while Varen'ka lives by the "rules," selflessly serving others out of feelings of moral duty, Kitty herself lives by the "heart," that is—emotionally and impulsively: "— Все не то. Я не могу иначе жить, как по сердцу, а вы живете по правилам. Я вас полюбила просто, а вы, верно, только затем, чтобы спасти меня, научить меня!" (18:249). Insisting on her right to be passionate in contrast to Varen'ka's moral but dispassionate personality, Kitty tears an umbrella from Varen'ka's hands, opening and closing it so vigorously that she breaks a spring:

— И по делом мне, и по делом мне! — быстро заговорила Кити, схватывая зонтик из рук Вареньки и глядя мимо глаз своего друга.

— По делом за то, что всё это было притворство, потому что это всё выдуманное, а не от сердца. Какое мне дело было до чужого человека? И вот вышло, что я причиной ссоры и что я делала то, чего меня никто не просил. Оттого что всё притворство! притворство! притворство!...

— Ах, как глупо, гадко! Не было мне никакой нужды... Всё притворство! — говорила она, открывая и закрывая зонтик. [...]

Варенька в шляпе и с зонтиком в руках сидела у стола, рассматривая пружину, которую сломала Кити. (18:248–49)

Since an umbrella can only function properly if all of its mechanisms are well-coordinated, Varen'ka's umbrella seems to epitomize her well-organized lifestyle of "rules." That Kitty breaks the spring in Varen'ka's umbrella could be read as her dissociation from Varen'ka's well-organized but dispassionate lifestyle. The fact that Kitty severs only their *indirect* contact, mediated through the umbrella, and not their direct, physical contact, points to the women's persistent unity despite the differences in their values and personalities. Although Kitty cannot live as Varen'ka does, she loves her as a friend, so their opposing lifestyles do not undermine the unity of their friendship.

During his separation from Kitty, Levin also undergoes a spiritual transformation. The parallel between their lives is evidence of their implicit unity, anticipating their reunion. At his estate, where he moves after Kitty rejects him, he occupies himself with manual work. He, like Tolstoi himself, considers this to be the best cure for melancholy ("Arbeitscur" in German means to "cure by the means of work"), consistent with his predominating *kinesthetic* form of haptic perception:

«Нужно физическое движенье, а то мой характер решительно портится», подумал он и решился косить, как ни неловко это будет ему перед братом и народом.

— Отлично! Ты не поверишь, какой это режим полезный против всякой дури. Я хочу обогатить медицину новым термином: Arbeitscur. (18:262, 272)

Because kinesthetic perception does not engage direct contact between bodies, which Aristotle considers potentially sexual, Levin's hard, manual work seems to *sublimate* his

corporeality, thus immersing him in the texture of life rather than alienating him from it. A mowing scene exemplifies this notion. The way in which Levin works with the peasant Titus indicates his ability to connect with people through kinesthetic activity, without direct touch. Tolstoi shows that Levin strains his muscles and challenges his endurance as he tries to match the peasant who heads the mowing: “Он ничего не думал, ничего не желал, кроме того, чтобы не отстать от мужиков и как можно лучше сработать” (18:265), “Его удовольствие отравилось только тем, что ряд его был нехорош. «Буду меньше махать рукой, больше всем туловищем»” (18:265). Likewise, Titus announces a break exactly at the moment when Levin physically cannot continue his work, as if he senses Levin’s fatigue, as if their physical states are so perfectly coordinated. Although Levin and Titus do not make physical contact, they seem to be inwardly connected through their work (or, kinesthetic perception):

Он [Levin] чувствовал, что махает из последних сил, и решился просить Тита остановиться. Но в это самое время Тит сам остановился и, нагнувшись, взял травы, отер косу и стал точить. Левин расправился и, вздохнув, оглянулся. ...
... Левин шел за ним [Titus], стараясь не отставать, и ему становилось всё труднее и труднее: наступала минута, когда, он чувствовал, у него не остается более сил, но в это самое время Тит останавливался и точил. (18:264–65)

Through physical work, Levin is not only united with human community (the world of the peasantry), but also achieves a kind of “incorporeal” experience. When Levin achieves a level of dexterity allowing him to work well without thinking about his movements, he experiences a particular joy and *forgets about his body*, so much so that it seems to him that *he* does not move the scythe but that *it* comes to move by itself:

Левин потерял всякое сознание времени и решительно не знал, поздно или рано теперь. В его работе стала происходить теперь перемена, доставлявшая ему огромное наслаждение. В середине его работы на него находили минуты, во время которых он забывал то, что делал, ему становилось легко, и в эти же самые минуты ряд его выходил почти так же ровен и хорош, как и у Тита. [...]

... и чаще и чаще приходили те минуты бессознательного состояния, когда можно было не думать о том, что делаешь. Коса резала сама собой. Это были счастливые минуты. (18:265–67)

The way in which Levin forgets about his body resembles young Tolstoi's record of his own experience, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, when he felt that he lost the sensation of his body during prayer ("я не чувствовал плоти, я был — один дух" 46:62). This quote indicates that young Tolstoi equates the spiritual with the incorporeal, which is not the case for the older Tolstoi of *Anna Karenina*. Although Levin's forgetting his body brings to mind Tolstoi's earlier depiction of "not feeling his flesh" during his exaltation, Levin's experience is manifestly corporeal. His exaltation not only originates in the corporeal realm of hard physical work, but also results in an increased awareness of his body. When Levin *loses* awareness of his body's movements, he becomes particularly aware of his body's vitality ("всё сознающее себя, полное жизни тело"): "Чем долее Левин косил, тем чаще и чаще он чувствовал минуты забытья, при котором уже не руки махали косой, а сама коса двигала за собой всё сознающее себя, полное жизни тело, и, как бы по волшебству, без мысли о ней, работа правильная и отчетливая делалась сама собой. Это были самые блаженные минуты" (18:267).

Levin's simultaneously present and absent awareness of his body recalls Anna's oppressive bodily awareness. Intoxicated with opium, she falls asleep *without* losing her awareness of self: "после второго приема опиума к утру заснула тяжелым, неполным сном, во всё время которого она не переставала чувствовать себя" (19:332). Although Tolstoi does not discuss Anna's body directly in this scene, the references to her "*heavy*" sleep and continual "*feeling*" suggest Anna's not only mental but also physical experience. While Levin loses the sense of his body while doing hard physical work, Anna cannot rid herself of her awareness of

her body even in sleep, when it should happen naturally. The contrast reveals Anna's improper and Levin's proper ways of being in the world. While Anna's indulgence in carnal pleasures (cutaneous and tactile) leads to the fatal *intertwinement* of self and body—and eventually the destruction of life *in* the body—Levin's manual work (kinesthetic perception) results in his embodiment of natural vitality. While Anna is attached only to her body, Levin connects his body with the natural world, embodying life's force as he partakes in it.

Although Levin's dominating haptic perception is kinesthetic, he does experience cutaneous sensations as well. The cold drops of rain on Levin's hot, sweaty shoulders give him a pleasurable and joyful sensation during his work. His sweat cools his body, and the sun burning on his back, his head, and his arm exposed by a rolled-up sleeve consolidate his strength and resilience:

Не понимая, что это и откуда, в середине работы он вдруг испытал приятное ощущение холода по жарким вспотевшим плечам. Он взглянул на небо во время натачиванья косы. Набежала низкая, тяжелая туча, и шел крупный дождь. Одни мужики пошли к кафтанам и надели их; другие, точно так же как Левин, только радостно пожимали плечами под приятным освежением. (18:265)
В самый жар косьба показалась ему не так трудна. Обливавший его пот прохлаждал его, а солнце, жегшее спину, голову и засученную по локоть руку, придавало крепость и упорство в работе [...] (18:266–67)

The contact with the world of nature (rather than another person's body) seems to sublimate Levin's cutaneous sensations. Levin and nature's reciprocal physical contact reflects Levin's "entwinement" with the world of nature, his immersion in it. While Levin touches the world of nature through his manual work, nature reciprocates, touching Levin with heat and rain and thus assisting him.

This "entwinement" is also reflected in Levin's participation in nature's creative forces, which Tolstoi equates with creating life itself. Looking over the field at dinnertime, Levin is

stunned by how the landscape has changed because of his and the peasants' work, noting that it looks completely new:

Левин оглянулся вокруг себя и не узнал места: так всё переменилось. Огромное пространство луга было скошено и блестело особенным, новым блеском, со своими уже пахнувшими рядами, на вечерних косых лучах солнца. И окошенные кусты у реки, и сама река, прежде не видная, а теперь блестящая сталью в своих извивах, и движущийся и поднимающийся народ, и крутая стена травы недокошенного места луга, и ястреба, вившиеся над оголенным лугом, — всё это было совершенно ново. (18:267–68)

In his “Confession,” written shortly after *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoi expresses his belief that the common folk collectively bear creative forces, co-creating life: “действия ... трудящегося народа, творящего жизнь” (23:40). As such, the peasants' work in the field participates in the regenerative forces inherent in nature. Levin's participation in the peasants' work not only unites him with the peasants but also intertwines him with nature's inherently transformative renewal, which nature thus lends him in turn. Levin's refuge in physical work transforms him and cures his sorrow after the emotional distress of Kitty's rejection.

Levin's long-range *visual* experiences, which conclude his transformation, not only emphasize his transition's spiritual nature (in keeping with Plato's hierarchy of the senses) but also associate him with Kitty, whom he notices on the road the morning after a night of meditation on life's true meaning. Looking at the clouds in the night sky, Levin realizes that his views on life have changed as seamlessly as the clouds have changed their shapes:

«Как красиво! — подумал он, глядя на странную, точно перламутровую раковину из белых барашков-облачков, остановившуюся над самою головой его на середине неба. — Как всё прелестно в эту прелестную ночь! И когда успела образоваться эта раковина? Недавно я смотрел на небо, и на нем ничего не было — только две белые полосы. Да, вот так-то незаметно изменились и мои взгляды на жизнь!» (18:291–92)

While Levin looks at the sky, Tolstoi emphasizes Kitty's far-sightedness (“дальнозоркость,” as Tolstoi refers to Kitty's eyes elsewhere). While travelling in the carriage, Kitty looks at the dawn

on the horizon. Her vision seems to be so far-ranged that she does not even notice Levin, who apparently walks by in close proximity: “Светлая и задумчивая, вся исполненная изящной и сложной внутренней, чуждой Левину жизни, она смотрела через него на зарю восхода” (18:292).

The scene concludes with a reference to their reciprocal gaze. When Kitty has passed by Levin, her carriage nearly disappearing in the distance, it seems to Levin that she casts her “truthful” eyes on him, recognizes him, and smiles: “В то самое мгновение, как виденье это уж исчезало, правдивые глаза взглянули на него. Она узнала его, и удивленная радость осветила ее лицо” (18:292). Kitty has no recollection of Levin on the road (as it turns out in a later scene that will feature their confessions of love), so he apparently has only imagined their mutual gaze. Even so, the visual connection, even if only imagined by him, concludes his inner transformation, as he realizes that Kitty is the key to his understanding the mystery of life and thus the answer to his meditation:

Только одни на свете были эти глаза. Только одно было на свете существо, способное сосредоточивать для него весь свет и смысл жизни. Это была она. Это была Кити. [...] Там только, в этой быстро удалявшейся и переехавшей на другую сторону дороги карете, там только была возможность разрешения столь мучительно тяготившей его в последнее время загадки его жизни. (18:292).

While Anna’s love for Vronskii alienates her from the world, Levin’s love for Kitty not only immerses him in the world but also enriches his perception of it. At first, when Kitty leaves his sight, Levin feels alienated: the road, the fields, and the village seem empty to him, and he himself feels estranged from everything: “Лай собак показал, что карета [Кити] проехала и деревню, — и остались вокруг пустые поля, деревня впереди и он сам, одинокий и чужой всему, одиноко идущий по заброшенной большой дороге” (18:293). However, he then notices a mysterious transformation in the sky and feels as if it *returns* his questioning gaze:

“Небо поглубело и просияло и с тою же нежностью, но и с тою же недостижимостью отвечало на его вопрошающий взгляд” (18:293). The anthropomorphic qualities of the sky’s “gaze”—its “tenderness” and “inaccessibility” in the current scene—evoke the image of Kitty, whom Levin loves but who has rejected him. Since Levin had not perceived the sky as either “tender” or “inaccessible” in his preceding meditation, the referential phrase “с тою же/with the same” (“с тою же нежностью, но и с тою же недостижимостью”) seems to be attributed to Kitty’s own tenderness and inaccessibility. So, Kitty enriches his perception of the world of nature. What is more, although the sky’s “gaze” communicates its distance and even inaccessibility to Levin, it nonetheless *returns* his own, revealing Levin’s implicit unity with both the world of nature and with Kitty. The sky-Kitty’s *returned* gaze to Levin suggests that Levin’s love for Kitty immerses him in the world, even as he believes that Kitty is “inaccessible” to him. In addition, Levin had identified Kitty with the sun in the earlier skating scene, their first scene together in the novel. When Levin confesses his romantic interest to her at the rink, she becomes upset with him, and Levin compares her to a sun hiding in the clouds. The “tenderness” of the sky, which now seems to return Levin’s gaze, suggests hope for—and indeed anticipates—the couple’s re-union.

Tolstoi emphasizes Levin and Kitty’s enduring connection in the scene leading to their confession of love. When Levin and Kitty meet at a party, a year after their “encounter” on the road, they feel a “mysterious” (“таинственный”) bond growing between them: “У них шел свой разговор с Левиным, и не разговор, а какое-то таинственное общение, которое с каждою минутой всё ближе связывало их” (18:411). Their bond is revealed in Levin’s ability to *sense* Kitty’s feelings, evocative of the way in which she had anticipated and empathized with his pain when about to reject his proposal. Tolstoi portrays Levin and Kitty’s love not so much as

a desire for physical closeness, but primarily as a deep form of empathy: the ability not only to understand but also to *feel* the other's emotional state as if it were one's own, which is consistent with Merleau-Ponty's conception of "intercorporeality." Tolstoi portrays Levin and Kitty's love for one another as *empathy*, which, to use Merleau-Ponty's term, "intertwines" them into a single whole by allowing them to feel the sensations of another.

Levin and Kitty's confession of love reinforces the impression of their "mysterious communication," as previously mentioned ("таинственное общение" 18:411). They reveal their love for one another virtually without words while playing *secrétaire*—a game requiring the almost impossible task of recovering the other player's message from only the first letters of each written word. The fact that Levin and Kitty intuit long and complex messages from scarce fragments produces the impression of near-telepathic communication:

Не было никакой вероятности, чтоб она могла понять эту сложную фразу; но он посмотрел на нее с таким видом, что жизнь его зависит от того, поймет ли она эти слова.

Она взглянула на него серьезно, потом оперла нахмуренный лоб на руку и стала читать. Изредка она взглядывала на него, спрашивая у него взглядом: «то ли это, что я думаю?». [...]

В разговоре их всё было сказано; было сказано, что она любит его и что скажет отцу и матери, что завтра он приедет утром. (18:418–19)

The fact that Levin and Kitty can guess one another's messages suggests that their love for one another creates an inner bond so powerful that they can not only sense one another's feelings but even guess one another's thoughts—in specific words.

In addition, Levin and Kitty's mutual confession engages their kinesthetic perception (writing on the table) and vision (looking intensely into one another's eyes), along with a couple of fragmented phrases, but it excludes any direct touch between them. After their confession, Levin and Kitty do not touch (at least, not within the framework of the novel) until the next morning when Levin arrives to propose, emphasizing the purity of their love. It is worth

mentioning that Vronskii and Anna's confession of love for one another at Princess Betsy's party ends in their physical contact, with manifestly sexual overtones. Vronskii feels Anna's gaze and touch burn him through; Anna is so excited that she seems to see her own eyes shining in the darkness, presumably envisaging their romance.

While Anna's love for Vronskii leads her to read hostility and hatred in other people, revealing her growing isolation in the scenes before her suicide, Levin's love for Kitty allows him to see all people as "nice and good" ("добрые славные") and thus immerses him in human community: "Не в одной этой комнате, но во всем мире для него существовали только он, получивший для себя огромное значение и важность, и она. Он чувствовал себя на высоте, от которой кружилась голова, и там где-то внизу, далеко, были все эти добрые славные Каренины, Облонские и весь мир" (18:406). In contrast to Anna, Levin even changes his opinions about people whom he previously did not like, such as, for instance, Turovtsyn. Levin dislikes him until Kitty tells him about Turovtsyn's generous help for Dolly when her children were ill. Looking again at Turovtsyn, Levin suddenly begins to see him as good, and cannot understand why he did not notice this goodness before:

— Не дурной, а ничтожный.
— И неправда! И поскорей не думайте больше так! — сказала Кити. — Я тоже была о нем очень низкого мнения, но это, это — премилый и удивительно добрый человек. Сердце у него золотое.
... Левин еще раз взглянул на Туровцына и удивился, как он прежде не понимал всей прелести этого человека.
— Виноват, виноват, и никогда не буду больше дурно думать о людях! — весело сказал он, искренно высказывая то, что он теперь чувствовал. (18:412–13)

Tolstoi's reference to "height" in describing Levin's exaltation does not seem accidental. As previously discussed, Plato describes the quest for true knowledge as the ascent from a cave to the earth's surface, where a person can see the sun. While Anna's passionate delirium on the train ends in her feeling as if she is "falling," Levin's love for Kitty makes him feel as if he is

soaring. Although Levin idealizes people, and therefore also sees reality in a somewhat distorted way, Tolstoi's reference to "height" suggests that Levin's perception of people as "good" is correct from a spiritual perspective, since it facilitates his connection with human community.

Finally, Levin's love for Kitty causes him not merely to *idealize* the world, but rather to see how all seemingly isolated things in the world are, in fact, intertwined into a harmonious whole. On his way to Kitty's house to make his official proposal, Levin experiences a moment of perfect sensory harmony, when visual, aural, kinesthetic, and olfactory sensations occur simultaneously in a single act of perception:

И что он видел тогда, того после уже он никогда не видал. В особенности дети, шедшие в школу, голуби сизые, слетевшие с крыши на тротуар, и сайки, посыпанные мукой, которые выставила невидимая рука, тронули его. Эти сайки, голуби и два мальчика были неземные существа. Всё это случилось в одно время: мальчик подбежал к голубю и улыбаясь взглянул на Левина; голубь затрепал крыльями и отпорхнул, блестя на солнце между дрожащими в воздухе пылинками снега, а из окошка пахло духом печеного хлеба, и выставились сайки. Всё это вместе было так необычайно хорошо, что Левин засмеялся и заплакал от радости. (18:424)

Tolstoi juxtaposes two versions of the scene: the first as it actually took place, and then Levin's perception of it. First, Tolstoi only introduces the participants of the scene: the boys going to school, the grey-blue pigeons flying down from the roof to the road, and the rolls appearing in the window. But then, Tolstoi describes the way in which Levin perceives the scene, capturing Levin's sensory impressions. Tolstoi creates a series of kinesthetic, visual, aural, and olfactory images flowing seamlessly into one another, stitching discrete impressions into a whole and thus emphasizing the totality of Levin's experience. A boy *runs up* to a pigeon (kinesthetic image) and *glances* at Levin (visual image), as the pigeon *flaps* its wings (aural) *fluttering* off (kinesthetic image) and *sparkling* in the sun amidst the air (visual), which is *trembling* with snow dust (kinesthetic and visual). Then, Levin smells the baked bread (olfactory) and the rolls appear

(visual) in the window. The phrases “всё это случилось” and “всё это вместе” emphasize the unity of the phenomena described and the wholeness of Levin’s experience. For Levin, a simple street scene becomes a sublime spiritual moment. The rolls seem to appear in the window as if put there by an “invisible hand,” anticipating the scene at the end of the novel when Levin stares at the sky, thinking of the divine order of the world and imagining the stars to be thrown by somebody’s “dexterous” (“меткою рукой”) and, one can infer, divine and invisible, hand. Levin also perceives the rolls, the pigeons, and the two boys as “unearthly” spiritual beings. Levin’s love for Kitty harmonizes his perception of the world, intertwining seemingly unrelated incidents into a single event.

Even though Levin perceives the event as unearthly, he is not alienated from it, but rather partakes. The street scene “touches” Levin (“дети, шедшие в школу, голуби сизые, слетевшие с крыши на тротуар, и сайки, посыпанные мукой, которые выставила невидимая рука, тронули его”), and the boy who initiates the action by running up to the pigeon includes Levin in the scene by looking at him, incorporating him in harmonious unity. The boy’s glance makes Levin a part of the scene rather than an external observer. Because Levin regards the world as harmonious, he himself partakes in its harmony. Although Levin observes the scene through his long-range senses of vision, hearing, and smell, he is not alienated, but, on the contrary, is immersed. The scene “touches” Levin. While of course Tolstoi means that Levin is touched (or moved) emotionally, in the context of the discussion of touch in the novel, this “emotional” touch confirms Levin’s immersion in the scene’s harmonious wholeness. In addition, the “invisible hand” seems to bear a double meaning: it is both the hand of a person in the house, whom Levin cannot see from the street and who puts the rolls in the window, and the invisible hand of the divine force that seems to be present, unseen, and inspires Levin’s exaltation. Once

again, Levin attains unity and integration not by touching, but, on the contrary, by maintaining distance (perceiving it through vision, hearing, and smell, without touch). Paradoxically, this does not alienate him from the world but entwines him with it, inspiring him to perceive reality as a harmonious, inclusive whole.

When Levin comes to see Kitty and propose to her, they touch and kiss: “Она сделала всё, что могла, — она подбежала к нему и отдалась вся, робея и радуясь. Он обнял ее и прижал губы к ее рту, искавшему его поцелуя” (18:426). Unlike Anna and Vronskii, Levin and Kitty’s touch is inclusive and uniting, as their love. Levin and Kitty’s love binds their entire family into a single whole, entwining Levin with Kitty’s family members. When Kitty’s mother sees how Levin and Kitty hold hands, she runs up to Levin, embraces his head, kisses him, and wets his cheeks with tears: “Княгиня, увидав их, задышала часто и тотчас же заплакала и тотчас же засмеялась и таким энергическим шагом, какого не ждал Левин, подбежала к ним и, обняв голову Левину, поцеловала его и обмочила его щеки слезами” (18:426). Then, when Kitty’s father *embraces* Levin, Levin feels an inexplicable tenderness for the old count, whom he used to perceive as a “stranger” (“чужой”) in the past:

— Я давно, всегда этого желал! — сказал он, взяв за руку Левина и притягивая его к себе. — Я еще тогда, когда эта ветренница вздумала...
— Папа! — вскрикнула Кити и закрыла ему рот руками.
— Ну, не буду! — сказал он. — Я очень, очень... ра... Ах! как я глуп...
Он обнял Кити, поцеловал ее лицо, руку, опять лицо и перекрестил ее.
И Левина охватило новое чувство любви к этому прежде чуждому ему человеку, старому князю, когда он смотрел, как Кити долго и нежно целовала его мясистую руку. (18:426)

Stiva’s unfaithfulness fragments his family and makes its members “чужие/strangers” to one another. Likewise, Anna’s passion for Vronskii alienates her from other people, severing her physical contact with them. Levin and Kitty’s love, by contrast, intertwines former “strangers”

into a new family, *including* new people into their tactile circle and thus their “intercorporeal” whole.

Levin and Kitty’s love not only unites former strangers, but even merges them into one “intercorporeal” whole, or “one flesh” (“плоть едину”) as Tolstoi’s representation of their wedding ceremony suggests. The Christian sacrament of marriage presupposed that the wedded spouses become “one flesh” (“плоть едину”): “сего ради оставит человек отца и мать и прилепится к жене, будет два в плоть едину” (19:24). Tolstoi suggests that Levin and Kitty become “one flesh” not because of any sexual (physical) attraction, but because God has brought them together and bound them with love: “Расстоящиеся собравый в соединение и союз любви положивый” (19:19). Therefore, Tolstoi shows that Levin and Kitty’s “*intercorporeal*” whole is *incorporeal* in origin, commanded and sanctified by God.

Tolstoi focuses on Levin and Kitty’s hands during the wedding ceremony. Levin takes Kitty’s hand (her right hand in his) and leads her around the lectern (“— Берите за руку невесту и ведите, — сказал шафер Левину” 19:17). The gesture of holding hands, which is then reinforced by their exchange of the rings, signifies their union, their “merging” into “one flesh” sanctified by God. It is true that Levin and Kitty’s feelings and thoughts differ during the ceremony. Levin listens to the words of the service carefully, reflects on them, and finds correspondences to his own feelings, fearing his inability to be a good husband and pleading to God for help. To the contrary, Kitty can hardly hear the words, delighted with her life’s long-anticipated change. While Levin believes that Kitty shares his feelings, she, as Tolstoi emphasizes, does not:

«Расстоящиеся собравый в соединение и союз любви положивый» — как глубокомысленны эти слова и как соответственны тому, что чувствуешь в эту минуту! — думал Левин. — Чувствует ли она то же, что я?»

И, оглянувшись, он встретил ее взгляд.

И по выражению этого взгляда он заключил, что она понимала то же, что и он. Но это было неправда; она совсем почти не понимала слов службы и даже не слушала их во время обручения. Она не могла слушать и понимать их: так сильно было одно то чувство, которое наполняло ее душу и всё более и более усиливалось. Чувство это была радость полного совершения того, что уже полтора месяца совершилось в ее душе и что в продолжение всех этих шести недель радовало и мучало ее. (19:19)

Although Levin's and Kitty's experiences of their wedding and their new married statuses differ, this does not alienate them from one another. On the contrary, giving his hand to Kitty after the ceremony, when they are leaving the church, Levin experiences a *new* kind of closeness with her, feeling that the *two* of them have indeed become *one*: "Левин ... подал ей руку и, ощущая новую странную близость, пошел из церкви [...] [Levin] чувствовал, что они уже были одно" (19:25).

Despite their differing attitudes to some events (for instance, the wedding ceremony), Levin and Kitty are bound on a larger emotional and moral level. Unlike Anna and Vronskii, Levin and Kitty care for one another's emotional comfort more than their own. An episode in which Tolstoi describes Levin and Kitty's temporary alienation during married life is a telling example of how their temporary discords cannot divide their "intercorporeal" unity. The episode evokes previous instances of Levin and Kitty's empathy towards one another but describes their oneness more explicitly, thus revealing their deepened bond. When Levin comes home half an hour later than expected, Kitty, who has been worried about him, accuses him of neglect. Suddenly, Levin experiences the torment of inner conflict: on the one hand, he instinctively wants to take offense, but on the other hand, he cannot be insulted by Kitty, because he feels that she is a part of *himself*:

Но только что она открыла рот, как слова упреков бессмысленной ревности, всего, что мучало ее в эти полчаса, которые она неподвижно провела, сидя на окне, вырвались у ней. Тут только в первый раз он ясно понял то, чего он не понимал, когда после венца повел ее из церкви. Он понял, что она не только близка ему, но

что он теперь не знает, где кончается она и начинается он. Он понял это по тому мучительному чувству раздвоения, которое он испытывал в эту минуту. Он оскорбился в первую минуту, но в ту же секунду он почувствовал, что он не может быть оскорблен ею, что она была он сам. (19:50)

Tolstoi describes Levin's inner conflict as "doubling" ("раздвоение"), evocative of Anna's "doubling" inner conflict between her sensual and moral selves. While Anna's inner conflict fragments the whole of her identity, Levin's "doubling" emphasizes his "intercorporeal" unity with Kitty, the way in which Levin feels that they have become one whole human being: he does not know where he *ends* and she *begins* ("он теперь не знает, где кончается она и начинается он"). Levin's emotional attachment to Kitty is so powerful that he perceives Kitty as a part of himself, and thus he experiences a discord *with her* as a discord *within himself*.

As Tolstoi elaborates on Levin's feelings towards Kitty, he uses a bodily metaphor to highlight Levin and Kitty's "intercorporeal" bond. Levin feels like a man who has been punched in the back and wishes to take revenge, but realizes that he has accidentally *punched himself* and that there is no one else to take revenge on. The only thing left, then, is to endure the pain and console himself: "Он испытывал в первую минуту чувство подобное тому, какое испытывает человек, когда, получив вдруг сильный удар сзади, с досадой и желанием мести оборачивается, чтобы найти виновного, и убеждается, что это он сам нечаянно ударил себя, что сердиться не на кого и надо перенести и утишить боль" (19:50). Since Levin cannot hurt Kitty, he comforts her *despite* the initial pain that she has caused him, leading to their reconciliation. Because the *two* are merged into *one*, they are not only prevented from hurting one another but also *double* their happiness ("удвоенное счастье любви"), thus reinforcing their unity: "Они помирились. Она, сознав свою вину, но не высказав ее, стала нежнее к нему, и они испытали новое удвоенное счастье любви" (19:51).

Since Levin and Kitty's union originates in emotional and moral kinship, rather than in sexual desire (although their relationship does not exclude it), their touch reinforces rather than undermines their connection. Overall, Tolstoi avoids describing Levin and Kitty's sensual touch directly, emphasizing their sensual modesty even after their marriage. For instance, when referring to their honeymoon, Tolstoi particularly mentions that there was no "honey" in it, perhaps implying that Levin and Kitty experienced not only intensive sexual desire and pleasure but also guilt (consistent with Tolstoi's own fear of controlling sexual drives). Both Levin and Kitty come to regard their honeymoon as the most humiliating, disgusting, shameful, and unhealthy time in their life, when they were hardly themselves and which they would have liked to expunge from their memories: "медовый месяц ... остался в воспоминании их обоих самым тяжелым и унижительным временем их жизни. Они оба одинаково старались в последующей жизни вычеркнуть из своей памяти все уродливые, постыдные обстоятельства этого нездорового времени, когда оба они редко бывали в нормальном настроении духа, редко бывали сами собою" (19:51).

Although most other manifestations of Levin and Kitty's sensuality are only hinted at, they are described with shimmering erotic overtones and as apparently pleasant and bonding experiences for Levin and Kitty. The episode where Kitty does her lace work exemplifies this notion. While working on her lace, Kitty looks at the back of Levin's head as he is working by the table, wishing that he would sense her gaze and turn to her. Levin does feel her gaze, interrupts his work, comes up to Kitty, and sits with her on the couch. Sitting close to his wife, Levin touches her and turns her head, saying something about her "strand of hair" ("косичка"). This apparently evolves into a more explicit fondling, which Tolstoi implies but omits from the narrative. The fact that Tolstoi omits any depiction of their fondling, having them guiltily jump

away from each other when the servant Kuz'ma comes in, emphasizes not only the couple's sexual modesty but also their tender intimacy, with its youthful freshness, affection, and shyness:

— А у тебя косичка, — сказал он, осторожно поворачивая ее голову. —
Косичка. Видишь, вот тут. Нет, нет мы делом занимаемся.

Занятие уже не продолжалось, и они, как виноватые, отскочили друг от друга, когда Кузьма вошел доложить, что чай подан. (19:54)

The scene concludes with Kitty's offer for Levin to play *four hands* as soon as he returns from some household work that he has been called off to:

— А из города приехали? — спросил Левин у Кузьмы.
— Только что приехали, разбираются.
— Приходи же скорее, — сказала она ему, уходя из кабинета, — а то без тебя прочту письма. И давай в четыре руки играть. (19:54)

Two people playing *one* instrument, synchronizing the movements of their *four* ("redoubled") hands as if they belonged to *one* person, suggests Merleau-Ponty's notion of "intercorporeality": Levin and Kitty's love has merged the two into "one body," therefore having "four hands." Though Tolstoi only refers to their playing four hands in passing, it is perhaps the best haptic expression of Levin and Kitty's sensuality facilitating the "redoubled/удвоенное" happiness discussed above.

Just as the couple's love facilitates Levin's bond with Kitty's family, it also reconnects Levin with his brother Nikolai, who is dying of consumption. As discussed in the chapter on Tolstoi's moral vision, the premature deaths of the author's brothers in 1856 and 1860 shattered him deeply, driving him to the brink of suicide. Affected by these experiences, Tolstoi portrays death as an ontological rift, a force that separates people. Tolstoi reveals Levin's alienation from his dying brother as a corporeal rift between their bodies. Watching his brother dying, Levin shudders when he thinks about his "terrifying" body and withered limbs, even though he wants to help him:

«Не может быть, чтоб это страшное тело был брат Николай», подумал Левин. [...]

... Ему и в голову не приходило подумать, чтобы разобрать все подробности состояния больного, подумать о том, как лежало там, под одеялом, это тело, как, сгибаясь, уложены были эти исхудалые голени, кострецы, спина и нельзя ли как-нибудь лучше уложить их, сделать что-нибудь, чтобы было хоть не лучше, но менее дурно. Его мороз пробирал по спине, когда он начинал думать о всех этих подробностях. (19:60, 62)

To the contrary, Kitty is not afraid of Nikolai's condition but rather feels sorry for him, willing to ameliorate his state: "Но Кити думала, чувствовала и действовала совсем не так. При виде больного ей стало жалко его. И жалость в ее женской душе произвела совсем не то чувство ужаса и гадливости, которое она произвела в ее муже, а потребность действовать, узнать все подробности его состояния и помочь им" (19:62-63). Tolstoi emphasizes that Kitty's actions, and thus her touch, are more than merely *physical* and *instinctive* though they are practical and mundane. Her actions are imbued with spiritual meaning: she not only improves Nikolai's physical condition but also cares for his spiritual state, as if preparing him for the afterlife in which she, as a Christian, apparently believes:

... деятельность ... была не инстинктивная, животная, неразумная, было то, что, кроме физического ухода, облегчения страданий, и Агафья Михайловна и Кити требовали для умирающего еще чего-то такого, более важного, чем физический уход, и чего-то такого, что не имело ничего общего с условиями физическими. [...]
Катя точно так же, кроме всех забот о белье, пролежнях, питье, в первый же день успела уговорить больного в необходимости причаститься и собороваться" (19:66).

Although Kitty mentions that she has learned a great deal about nursing at the spa, Tolstoi suggests that Kitty, as a woman ("жалость в ее женской душе"), has an intuitive knowledge of life and death, knows how to act, and does so with gentle (and feminine, as Tolstoi reiterates) consideration ("только женщинам свойственно, неоскорбляюще и сочувствующею тихою оживленностью" 19:61). Kitty's arrangements (changing Nikolai's clothing and bed sheets, cleaning his room, and inviting a doctor to see him) temporarily

improve Nikolai's physical state, but also, more importantly, offer him an emotional connection with Kitty. Tolstoi conveys their connection through their *mutual* touch: Nikolai strokes Kitty's hand gently with gratitude, and Kitty presses his hand with both of hers: "— Мне гораздо уж лучше, — сказал он. — Вот с вами я бы давно выздоровел. Как хорошо! — Он взял ее руку и потянул ее к своим губам, но, как бы боясь, что это ей неприятно будет, раздумал, выпустил и только погладил ее. Кити взяла эту руку обеими руками и пожала ее" (19:64).

Apart from connecting with Nikolai herself, Kitty also bridges the rift between Nikolai and her husband, helping Levin to overcome his terror of his brother's imminent death. Prompted by Kitty, Levin lifts and holds his brother's body in his arms while Kitty changes the linens and fixes the pillow:

Как ни страшно было Левину обнять руками это страшное тело, взяться за те места под одеялом, про которые он хотел не знать, но, поддаваясь влиянию жены, Левин сделал свое решительное лицо, какое знала его жена, и, запустив руки, взялся, но, несмотря на свою силу, был поражен странною тяжестью этих изможденных членов. Пока он поворачивал его, чувствуя свою шею обнятою огромной исхудалой рукой, Кити быстро, неслышно перевернула подушку, подбила ее и поправила голову больного и редкие его волосы, опять прилипшие на виске. (19:65)

Encouraging Levin to help her, Kitty facilitates Levin and Nikolai's *mutual* touch. Despite Nikolai's physical deterioration, his body presses on Levin's arms, weighing on his muscles. While Levin supports his brother's body, Nikolai grasps Levin's neck with his large hand. The brothers' reciprocal physical touch also facilitates their *emotional* reconnection. Levin begins to feel not only the terror of observing Nikolai's deteriorating body but also the grief of losing a person he deeply loves. The brothers' mutual love for one another, which both of them finally reveal, is reflected in their touch as Levin lowers Nikolai back into bed. Pulling Levin's hand, Nikolai draws it to his lips and kisses it. As Nikolai pulls, Levin yields to his guidance, thus reciprocating his touch. As Nikolai kisses him, Levin cannot hold back his tears, and they shake

his entire body: “Больной удержал в своей руке руку брата. Левин чувствовал, что он хочет что-то сделать с его рукой и тянет ее куда-то. Левин отдавался замирая. Да, он притянул ее к своему рту и поцеловал. Левин затрясся от рыдания и, не в силах ничего выговорить, вышел из комнаты” (19:65).

While Nikolai’s death causes Levin to feel alienated, Kitty’s love is the force that reintegrates him with the texture of life. Tolstoi writes that Levin and Kitty’s love bridges the gap in the texture of Levin’s life, saving him from despair and reconnecting him with life by convincing him that, while death is imminent, he should live on, love, and rejoice: “но теперь, благодаря близости жены, чувство это не приводило его в отчаяние: он, несмотря на смерть, чувствовал необходимость жить и любить. Он чувствовал, что любовь спасала его от отчаяния и что любовь эта под угрозой отчаяния становилась еще сильнее и чище” (19:75). The chapter about Nikolai’s death concludes with the announcement of Kitty’s pregnancy. Tolstoi continues his meditations on death and birth a bit later in the novel, revealing that the birth of Levin and Kitty’s son reconciles him with his brother’s death. The miracle of birth makes him view death not as the end of life, but only as a window into the unearthly realm, as birth is: “Но и то горе (Nikolai’s death) и эта радость (Levin’s child’s birth) одинаково были вне всех обычных условий жизни, были в этой обычной жизни как будто отверстия, сквозь которые показывалось что-то высшее” (19:291). Levin and Kitty’s sensual touch yields a child and therefore counteracts death, as Tolstoi suggests, by bridging the gap in Levin’s heart and in his life’s corporeal texture that was left by Nikolai’s death.

Tolstoi emphasizes that Kitty’s pregnancy is a spiritual event by showing how it transforms Levin’s perception of Kitty’s body. Levin begins to experience the pleasure of being close to his beloved, *free from sensuality* and thus *pure*: “совершенно чистое от чувственности

наслаждение близости к любимой женщине” (19:130–31). It seems that since, according to Tolstoi, Kitty’s pregnancy and childbirth are spiritual events, the novel includes a detailed depiction of the couple’s touch during Kitty’s labor while excluding or only hinting at their more sensual touches.

Tolstoi’s depiction produces the impression that Kitty’s touch includes Levin in her physical experience of childbirth. During labor, Kitty clasps Levin’s hand with unusual force and then pushes it away, apparently repeating her contractions with her hand: “те минуты, когда она призывала его к себе, и он держал ее за потную, то сжимающую с необыкновенною силою, то отталкивающую его руку, — казались ему часами, то часы казались ему минутами” (19:290). Through Kitty’s press and push, Levin can, in a way, sense Kitty’s labor pains and contractions and thus participate in her physical experience, feeling her agony through her touch. Kitty’s pulling and pushing away Levin’s hand is reminiscent of Anna’s childbirth scene, when she pulls and pushes away Karenin’s hand. Although their gestures are in some ways alike and reflect a woman’s typical experience during childbirth, they contrast the two heroines. While Anna’s pressing and pushing away of Karenin’s hand reflects her conflicted personality, torn between her moral guilt and her aversion towards Karenin, Kitty’s gesture, to the contrary, points to her bond with Levin and reasserts the impression of their “intercorporeal” whole.

Tolstoi reinforces the spiritual nature of Levin and Kitty’s physical bond by comparing their newborn child to a flame over a lamp (“огонек над светильником”): “А между тем там, в ногах постели, в ловких руках Лизаветы Петровны, как огонек над светильником, колебалась жизнь человеческого существа, которого никогда прежде не было и которое так же, с тем же правом, с тою же значительностью для себя, будет жить и плодить себе

подобных” (19:293). Tolstoi’s “flame” symbolism of the newborn’s life derives from the Christian tradition rather than from Western philosophy. In Plato, comparison with “flame” (fire) instead of sun (light) would suggest undeveloped spirituality. To the contrary, Christian tradition does not distinguish between “flame” and “light.” A lit candle or a lit lamp represents the divine light, Christ as “the light of the world” (John 12:8), as well as the faithful’s prayers and aspirations towards God. While both Levin-Kitty and Anna-Vronskii yield a child, Tolstoi associates only Levin and Kitty’s child with light. This would seem to indicate that, since Levin and Kitty’s love originates in moral and emotional kinship rather than carnal desire, their *touch* yields *light*, which reinforces the righteousness of their bond and their touch.

The fact that Kitty’s childbirth reconnects Levin with his faith, helping him overcome the spiritual crisis escalated by his brother’s death, emphasizes the event’s spiritual nature. Levin rediscovers his faith during Kitty’s childbirth, when he begins to pray for her life with his past youthful ingenuity and without questioning his faith (“несмотря на столь долгое и казавшееся полным отчуждением, чувствуя, что он обращается к Богу точно так же доверчиво и просто, как и во времена детства и первой молодости” 19:291). After a long course of doubts and meditations on faith, Levin realizes that he is trying to answer a “big” question about the *meaning* of his life, something that the materialistic, scientific knowledge that had replaced his faith cannot do:

«Без знания того, что я такое и зачем я здесь, нельзя жить. А знать я этого не могу, следовательно, нельзя жить», говорил себе Левин. [...]

И, счастливый семьянин, здоровый человек, Левин был несколько раз так близок к самоубийству, что спрятал шнурок, чтобы не повеситься на нем, и боялся ходить с ружьем, чтобы не застрелиться. (19:371)

... Организм, разрушение его, неистребимость материи, закон сохранения силы, развитие — были те слова, которые заменили ему прежнюю веру. (19:367)

Tolstoi describes Levin's spiritual insight in terms of *bodily* sensations—comparing him to a person who is cold in the winter without warm clothing. Materialistic knowledge, Tolstoi suggests, is like a thin, lace shirt that cannot protect the body from cold in the winter and thus endangers it with imminent death. On the contrary, faith is like a warm fur coat, which can protect the body: "... и Левин вдруг почувствовал себя в положении человека, который променял бы теплую шубу на кисейную одежду и который в первый раз на морозе несомненно, не рассуждениями, а всем существом своим убедился бы, что он всё равно что голый и что он неминуемо должен мучительно погибнуть" (19:367). In other words, Tolstoi's comparison suggests that faith, however unreasonable from a materialistic point of view, is the most reasonable thing for a person to have—like a *warm* coat in the winter *cold*. It is crucial for human life, something that alone can provide the answer to the meaning of life and thus protect this life from physical annihilation.

Tolstoi shows how Levin's rediscovered faith not only immerses him in the world, but also allows him to perceive the world as infinitely expanding. His faith relates him to the universal human community: "Я со всеми людьми имею только одно твердое, несомненное и ясное знание, и знание это не может быть объяснено разумом — оно вне его и не имеет никаких причин и не может иметь никаких последствий" (19:377). Further, his corporeality relates him to the world of nature and connects him with all material things: "в моем теле, в теле этой травы и этой букашки (вот она не захотела на ту траву, расправила крылья и улетела) совершается по физическим, химическим, физиологическим законам обмен материи. А во всех нас, вместе с осинами, и с облаками, и с туманными пятнами, совершается развитие" (19:378).

Finally, faith allows Levin to aspire beyond the material, towards the spiritual realm. In keeping with Plato's association of vision with intellectual/spiritual knowledge, it is no accident that Tolstoi describes Levin's aspiration for the spiritual in terms of his visual perception. Looking at the sky, Levin realizes that he is correct both when he sees the firm vault of the sky and when he strains his vision to see *beyond* it. By the "firm vault of the sky," Tolstoi means the material—tangible and visible—world, accessible to one's senses, and by the world beyond the visible range, he implies a spiritual one, inaccessible to corporeal perception:

«Разве я не знаю, что это — бесконечное пространство, и что оно не круглый свод? Но как бы я ни щурился и ни напрягал свое зрение, я не могу видеть его не круглым и не ограниченным, и, несмотря на свое знание о бесконечном пространстве, я несомненно прав, когда я вижу твердый голубой свод, я более прав, чем когда я напрягаюсь видеть дальше его». [...]
«Неужели это вера? — подумал он, боясь верить своему счастью. (19:381–82)

While Anna's sensuality shuts down her vision (she begins to "narrow" her eyes to avoid seeing her position), Levin "narrows" (strains) his eyes to see beyond the material world into the spiritual. Unlike Anna's passion for Vronskii, Levin's love for Kitty does not alienate him from people or from physical reality but, on the contrary, intertwines him with both, as well as reconnecting him with his faith and thus leading him to embrace both the corporeal and the spiritual aspects of life.

Kitty is immersed in the texture of life as well, but in a different way from Levin. Since Kitty never loses her faith, she does not undergo any spiritual transformation. However, she does undergo a transformation as a woman, becoming a mother to her child and engaging in her maternal duties. Both Kitty and Anna experience haptic sensations in their interactions with their children; however, their haptic experiences differ. Tolstoi emphasizes the tactile and cutaneous sensations in Anna's interactions with her son: Anna tenderly strokes Serëzha, touching him and feeling the warmth of his body, or touches and admires (although with lesser emotional

engagement) her little daughter's body as she plays with her. As was previously discussed, Anna's dominating tactile and cutaneous interactions with her children, especially Serēzha, are consistent with her sensual nature. By contrast, Tolstoi emphasizes that Kitty interacts with her child primarily through her *muscles*. Bathing the child, she squeezes the sponge in one, smooth motion, revealing her flexing muscle (“напрягая мускул”)—the detail that stands out, given Kitty's otherwise gentle built:

Кити стояла с засученными рукавами у ванны над полоскавшимся в ней ребенком [...]. Одною рукою она поддерживала под голову плавающего на спине и корячившего ножонки пухлого ребенка, другою она, равномерно напрягая мускул, выжимала на него губку. ...

Кити нагнулась к нему [baby], — он просиял улыбкой, уперся ручками в губку и запрукал губами, производя такой довольный и странный звук, что не только Кити и няня, но и Левин пришел в неожиданное восхищение. (19:397)

Although Kitty interacts with her baby through her muscles, rather than through tactile and cutaneous activity more characteristic of a tender caress, Kitty's touch with her child is reciprocal, like Anna's touch with her son. While Kitty bathes the child and squeezes the sponge over him, he presses his hand against the sponge. The verb “уперся” implies a certain degree of muscular tension, reverberating with Kitty's flexing muscle. Although Kitty and her son's touch may seem to be indirect (mediated through the sponge) and thus to suggest their alienation, it is in fact consistent with the *kinesthetic* form of haptic perception that Tolstoi emphasizes in Levin's and Kitty's physicalities. Kitty and her baby are connected with one another through the dominating kinesthetic, rather than tactile and cutaneous, form of touch.

In fact, the peaceful, mundane scene of the child's bath concludes Levin's thus-far troubled efforts to connect with his son emotionally. While Levin feels immersed in the world on the cosmic level, he struggles to love his own son. As he explains to Kitty, he had expected that his love for him would be an all-embracing, pleasant feeling, whereas he felt only pity and

aversion. Levin's feelings for his son are transformed during an incident preceding the bathing scene, when Kitty and the child are caught in a thunderstorm, and Levin is terrified that a falling tree may have harmed them. This fear proves a transformative experience for Levin, through which he recognizes his love for his son ("Нынче после этого страха во время грозы я понял, как я люблю его" 19:397). The bathing episode confirms Levin's acquired love for the child. When Kitty demonstrates to Levin that their son has begun to recognize people, Levin is delighted, as are Kitty and the nanny ("не только Кити и няня, но и Левин пришел в неожиданное восхищение" 19:397).

The scene sequence ending the novel portrays Levin under the night sky, illuminated by lightning, as he meditates on his acquired love for his son and his regained faith. Since both sky and light are associated with vision, and vision, according to Plato, is the most spiritual sense, the scene reaffirms Levin's predisposition towards the spiritual rather than the carnal:

Уже совсем стемнело, и на юге, куда он смотрел, не было туч. Тучи стояли с противной стороны. Оттуда вспыхивала молния, и слышался дальний гром. Левин прислушивался к равномерно падающим с лип в саду каплям и смотрел на знакомый ему треугольник звезд и на проходящий в середине его млечный путь с его разветвлением. При каждой вспышке молнии не только млечный путь, но и яркие звезды исчезали, но, как только потухала молния, опять, как будто брошенные какой-то меткой рукой, появлялись на тех же местах. (19:397–98)

The reference to God's "dexterous hand" ("меткой рукой") along with the light imagery confirms the connection between physical dexterity and long-ranged sight, both of which Tolstoi associates with Levin and Kitty to convey their correct, moral way of living.

Tolstoi endows Levin and Kitty with distinctively kinesthetic perceptions, rather than tactile and cutaneous sensations. By emphasizing their bodily dexterity and muscular work, reducing their physical contact with one another, and excluding their indulgence in tactile and cutaneous perception of worldly phenomena, Tolstoi shows their moral purity. In addition, both

characters are far-sighted, which, in keeping with Plato's philosophy, emphasizes their spiritual rather than carnal predispositions. Levin and Kitty's love does not exclude sexual relations but originates in their moral affinity and emotional susceptibility to one another's feelings. They achieve emotional and physical unity, which Tolstoi conveys through references to them becoming "one flesh," or an "intercorporeal" whole in the terms of Merleau-Ponty.

While Tolstoi portrays Anna's beloved, Vronskii, as a corrupted man with limited—if any—moral sense, he portrays Levin's beloved, Kitty, as his opposite—the embodiment of the spiritual. Tolstoi endows Kitty with intuitive spiritual knowledge and inherently strong moral sense (demonstrated when she cannot forgive herself for her infatuation with Vronskii and later with Veslovskii). She has an innate ability to love and forgive (when she forgives Levin for his past sexual transgressions). She is naturally perspicacious and can sense her husband's dying brother Nikolai's physical and emotional needs, even as Levin fails to do so, despite his learning. Tolstoi also associates Kitty directly with sunlight at the beginning of the novel, when Levin looks at her at the skating rink, which, in keeping with Plato's "cave" metaphor suggests that Kitty does not need to strive for the spiritual but rather embodies the spiritual. While Anna's passion for Vronskii alienates her and distorts her judgment, Levin's love for Kitty immerses him into both human community and material creation, bringing him to view his existence and surroundings as a harmoniously intertwined whole.

5. Karenin

Tolstoi's moral vision suggests that the body is a battlefield between the carnal and the spiritual. However, instead of suggesting that we deny the body in favor of the spirit, he asserts that the body can serve to either satisfy carnal desires or to achieve spiritual goals. By "spiritual," Tolstoi does not mean any incorporeal exaltation or set of ethical rules, but rather one's personal

ability to empathize with others. Since, for Tolstoi, both carnal and spiritual experiences are *corporeal*, he views indulgence in bodily sensations (such as sex, gluttony, and leisure) and alienation from bodily experiences (such as intellectual activity and religious dogmatism without personal empathy) as equally harmful. Depicting Karenin, Tolstoi shows that his fear of the emotional sphere, reflected in his alienation from the corporeal, undermines his ability to connect with Anna through touch and causes suffering to his own body.

Unlike Stiva and Anna, Karenin is a cerebral rather than a corporeal character. For instance, Karenin recurrently emphasizes the importance of morality, which he views as a set of Christian ethical principles rather than a personal, moral feeling. When he prepares to admonish Anna for her inappropriate conduct with Vronskii, he appeals to religious dogmas and social norms, trying to avoid discussing their feelings. Likewise, he recalls famous historical figures who were similarly deceived by their wives instead of admitting that Anna's unfaithfulness has hurt him. Karenin's interests are consistent with his intellectual rather than carnal pursuits. Karenin's reading interests are limited to religion, history, politics, and economics, all of which appeal to a reader's mind. Although Karenin is familiar with the arts and reads poetry—for example, he reads the presumably ultra-romantic Duc de Lille's *Poésie des enfers* (*The Poetry of Hell*, invented by Tolstoi as a parody of Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*)—he does so out of duty rather than to satisfy his emotional needs or for aesthetic pleasure. He also defends classical education and the study of language structures because he believes that such studies instill moral principles. He condemns the natural sciences as harmful, as he reckons that they incite nihilism and therefore undermine a person's religious beliefs. In addition, Karenin's enthusiasm for his job as a state official and his appreciation for clear organization, including his meticulous

punctuality and love for organizing the writing tools on his desk, highlight his cerebral (intellectual and well-organized) persona.

Though Karenin *is* capable of expressing his emotions (as the reader learns in the course of the novel), he is generally an emotionally reserved person who prefers to suppress his feelings and avoid emotional engagement. Karenin perceives the sphere of personal relations as a frightening “пучина жизни/bottomless deep of life” and prefers to deal only with its “reflection” by sorting out the lives of other people, such as petitioners asking for professional interference in their affairs:

Всю жизнь свою Алексей Александрович прожил и проработал в сферах служебных, имеющих дело с отражениями жизни. И каждый раз, когда он сталкивался с самою жизнью, он отстранялся от нее. Теперь он испытывал чувство, подобное тому, какое испытал бы человек, спокойно прошедший над пропастью по мосту и вдруг увидавший, что этот мост разобран и что там пучина. Пучина эта была — сама жизнь, мост — та искусственная жизнь, которую прожил Алексей Александрович. Ему в первый раз пришли вопросы о возможности для его жены полюбить кого-нибудь, и он ужаснулся пред этим. (18:151)

Tolstoi emphasizes Karenin’s alienation by describing his contact with life as a “collision” (“сталкивался с самою жизнью”) that scares and estranges him (“отстранялся от нее [жизни]”).

Karenin wrongly perceives his feelings—particularly, pity, empathy, and compassion—as a kind of illness, an “emotional disturbance” (“душевное расстройство”), and tries to suppress its manifestations, which leads not only to alienation from but even aggression towards the person who evokes his pity. Tolstoi exemplifies this estrangement by describing that when Karenin sees a child or a woman crying, he becomes irritated and drives them away instead of helping them:

Вид слез приводил его в растерянное состояние, и он терял совершенно способность соображения. Правитель его канцелярии и секретарь знали это и предупреждали просительниц, чтоб отнюдь не плакали, если не хотят испортить

свое дело. «Он рассердится и не станет вас слушать», говорили они. И действительно, в этих случаях душевное расстройство, производимое в Алексее Александровиче слезами, выражалось торопливым гневом. «Я не могу, не могу ничего сделать. Извольте итти вон!» кричал он обыкновенно в этих случаях. (18:293)

Karenin's compassion casts him into inner confusion, "disorganization" (to translate the word "расстройство" literally) of his rational, typically poised and ordered world, which causes him great distress and estrangement ("отстранялся").

Tolstoi's reference to "reflections of life" in the description above, depicting Karenin's professional sphere, evokes Plato's discussion of the cave's "shadows." According to Plato, looking at "shadows" defines a person's limited knowledge about the world. In keeping with Plato, the fact that Karenin prefers to deal with "reflections" of life suggests the limitations of his knowledge. In addition, Tolstoi's references to Karenin's eyes as "tired" seem to corroborate this interpretation. Since Plato associates vision not only with intellectual but also moral ascension, Karenin's "tired" eyes suggest his limited knowledge of true morality. Despite Karenin's intellectual superiority and adherence to religious dogma, his emotional restraint proves to be a moral flaw. Since empathy is not only an emotional but also a moral quality, Karenin's fear of empathetic feelings ("пучина жизни") renders him insensitive towards Anna and even towards their son once she announces her affair with Vronskii.

Consistent with Karenin's reserved personality, his marriage to Anna (before the affair) seems to have been based on mutual respect rather than intimate affection or sensual attraction. Although Karenin is attached to Anna ("[т]а привязанность, которую он испытывал к Анне" 19:77), he shows this attachment in a typically restrained manner, often concealing his love for her in banter ("тоном насмешки над тем, кто бы в самом деле так говорил" 18:111). As glimpses of their relationship before Anna's infatuation with Vronskii suggest, Karenin and

Anna's interactions were typically polite but unemotional: Karenin would discuss his professional life with Anna, and she would willingly encourage him to do so. In turn, she would share her daily joys and concerns. Perhaps the only time that Karenin reveals his affection for Anna is when she returns from Moscow. Karenin's speech breaks when he tells Anna that he is glad that he will no longer have to dine alone ("Опять буду обедать не один, — продолжал Алексей Александрович уже не шуточным тоном. — Ты не поверишь, как я привык..." 18:114). At the same time, he seeks physical contact with her, not only touching but pressing and kissing her hand twice during the day: "И он, долго сжимая ей руку, с особенною улыбкой посадил ее в карету" (18:114); "Он поцеловал ее руку и подсел к ней. [...] Он пожал ей руку и опять поцеловал ее" (18:117, 119). His "special" smile, "prolonged" pressing, and recurring kiss ("опять") on Anna's hand, along with his breaking voice, suggest an emotional agitation betraying his genuine, but typically concealed, affection.

In keeping with Plato's mind/body dichotomy, Karenin's rational personality and reserved emotionality are reflected in both his physique and his haptic interactions with people and physical reality. Since his mind dominates his life, his body appears "fleshless." Karenin's legs are bony and chilly; he cracks his knuckles, reasserting their boniness, and his white, moist hands bulge with bluish veins. Karenin looks on with curiosity at those with stronger and fuller bodies, be they Vronskii, Stiva, or a gentleman of the bed-chamber with "fat calves": "... эти другие люди, эти Вронские, Облонские... эти камергеры с толстыми икрами. И ему представлялся целый ряд этих сочных, сильных, не сомневающих людей, которые невольно всегда и везде обращали на себя его любопытное внимание" (19:91). He often addresses people with his typically "cold" smile, tone, gesture, or gaze, which evokes his "bony" and "chilly" body and reasserts his "fleshless" rationality—a mind deprived of the flesh.

Karenin's bony body makes a sharp contrast with the others' strong and full bodies, producing the impression that his body lacks muscle, fat, and blood—all traits constituting a *living* body, so without them he appears "lifeless." Although his bulging veins suggest blood coursing through his body, they also evoke veins' typically bluish tint (which Tolstoi does not mention but which the reader can elicit), emphasizing the lifelessness of his white skin. In addition, the fact that his veins bulge highlights the impression of his fleshlessness, typical of aging, lean bodies in general.

Karenin seems to be more passionate and even, it seems, intimate in his professional life than his personal one. When Karenin reads his groundbreaking proposal on the settlement of racial minorities, he touches the edges of the paper "tenderly": "его белые с напухшими жилами руки, так нежно длинными пальцами ощупывавшие оба края лежавшего пред ним листа белой бумаги" (18:335). By comparison, Stiva perceives his daughter's skin as "tender" when he strokes her neck to express his affection. Although Karenin touches and kisses Anna's hands with evident emotional attachment, as discussed above, Tolstoi does not qualify these touches and kisses as "tender." The way in which Tolstoi omits any explicit qualifiers in his description of Karenin's touches with Anna but explicitly depicts Karenin's touch on the paper as "tender" renders the latter nearly sensual, which highlights his impassive and a-sensual individuality when it comes to his personal and especially intimate relations.

Other instances also emphasize Karenin's alienation from the corporeal realm. Karenin has fathered only one child during his eight years of marriage (compared to Stiva's nine children over roughly the same period). Karenin is intellectually daring (he undertakes groundbreaking socio-economic reforms), but physically "timid": he is concerned that he might have to fight Vronskii in a duel. Additionally, a doctor suggests that Karenin increase his physical movements

and decrease his intellectual activity in order to improve his health. Perhaps the most explicit manifestation of the imbalance between Karenin's mind and body is epitomized in his comparison to a child, wherein Tolstoi juxtaposes physical movement with intellectual activity. Explaining the way in which Karenin copes with distress, Tolstoi concludes that, if a child needs *muscular* movement to alleviate pain, Karenin needs *intellectual* movement to alleviate emotional unease, so he "speaks well and intelligently":

Как убившийся ребенок, прыгая, приводит в движение свои мускулы, чтобы заглушить боль, так для Алексея Александровича было необходимо умственное движение, чтобы заглушить те мысли о жене, которые в ее присутствии и в присутствии Вронского и при постоянном повторении его имени требовали к себе внимания. А как ребенку естественно прыгать, так и ему было естественно хорошо и умно говорить. (18:218)

Although speaking is a physical activity involving muscles and joints, Tolstoi particularly emphasizes that Karenin's speaking is a manifestation of his *mind* rather than his body.

Tolstoi asserts that Karenin's "fleshless" and "lifeless" body is the result of his emotional restraint. Karenin's body appears "lifeless" or "dead" ("мертвенность") when he tries to suppress his outburst of "emotional disturbance" as Anna confesses her love for Vronskii after the steeplechase. When Anna starts crying, Karenin *sits still* and *does not look* at Anna, in order to conceal his emotional distress:

Алексей Александрович не пошевелился и не изменил прямого направления взгляда. Но всё лицо его вдруг приняло торжественную неподвижность мертвого [...] (18:224)

Когда, возвращаясь со скачек, Анна объявила ему о своих отношениях к Вронскому и тотчас же вслед за этим, закрыв лицо руками, заплакала, Алексей Александрович, несмотря на вызванную в нем злобу к ней, почувствовал в то же время прилив того душевного расстройства, которое на него всегда производили слезы. (18:293–94)

Karenin's efforts to suppress his emotionality "deaden" him, bringing him to resemble a lifeless statue or a corpse, thus reasserting Tolstoi's notion that Karenin's restrained emotionality alienates him from life.

Karenin's haptic interactions with Anna reflect his emotional and moral rigidity, which is evident from the episodes in which he cracks his knuckles. For instance, Karenin cracks his knuckles when he prepares to admonish Anna for her misconduct at Princess Betsy's party. Karenin is genuinely confused and does not know how to approach his conversation with Anna. Unwilling to discuss Anna's feelings or his own, Karenin settles on a speech resembling a formal report rather than an intimate conversation, indicating his awkwardness in personal affairs: "в голове его ясно и отчетливо, как доклад, составила форма и последовательность предстоящей речи" (18:152). After agonizing hesitation, Karenin decides to avoid any personal emotional engagement by appealing to social norms and religious dogmas, stressing his husbandly duty to point out Anna's questionable behavior and protect her reputation in society. Once Karenin finishes composing his speech, he cracks his knuckles to regain his poise and to finalize his decision: "Этот жест, дурная привычка — соединение рук и трещанье пальцев — всегда успокаивал его и приводил в аккуратность, которая теперь так нужна была ему" (18:153). Dealing with a complicated matter in the simplest and least personal way, Karenin seems to impose order on his body by forcing his unruly joints back into place, in the same way that he (unsuccessfully, as it turns out) tries to impose order onto his and Anna's lives. Karenin's gesture reasserts not only the rigidity of his body but also the rigidity of his personality—his fear of dealing with inevitably ambiguous personal matters, adhering to unquestionable and impersonal social and religious norms instead.

Tolstoi associates Karenin's knuckle-cracking with his cruelty towards Anna in the episode when he writes a note to her after she has confessed her love for Vronskii. Karenin cracks his knuckles as he sits to write down his decision. Karenin is hurt by Anna's unfaithfulness but is unwilling to admit it. He typically appeals to Christian ethics, yet, in this case, he abuses Christian moral norms, sanctifying his concealed desire to take revenge on Anna for hurting him. When Karenin offers Anna to stay with him as his wife, allegedly giving her the chance to keep her good name and improve her morality, he also threatens to take away her son if she decides to leave, forcing her to choose between her passion for Vronskii and her love for her son. Presenting Anna with such a terrible choice, Karenin, in fact, acts out of self-pity and self-preservation, fearing the changes that Anna's infatuation brings to their relationship and their lives. Trying to keep Anna by his side, he secretly hopes that his relationship with Anna will be restored to such a degree that he will feel no discord, even at the cost of Anna's unhappiness: "отношения восстановятся прежние ... то есть восстановятся в такой степени, что я не буду чувствовать расстройства в течении своей жизни. Она должна быть несчастлива, но я не виноват и потому не могу быть несчастлив" (18:298–99). Karenin convinces himself that he acts morally, according to Christian principles, but, as Tolstoi points out, he does not seek spiritual *guidance* in Christianity: "Только при таком решении я поступаю и сообразно с религией, — сказал он себе, — только при этом решении я не отвергаю от себя преступную жену, а даю ей возможность исправления и даже — как ни тяжело это мне будет — посвящаю часть своих сил на исправление и спасение ее" (18:298). Karenin is satisfied with the fact that his decision coincides with Christian morality outwardly, but ignores the inner difference between his decision and the Christian principles it purports to follow. While the main principle of Christianity is to love and forgive, as Karenin

will only realize at Anna's "deathbed," his decision here demonstrates neither love nor forgiveness: [П]ереживая эти тяжелые минуты, он и не подумал ни разу о том, чтоб искать руководства в религии, теперь, когда его решение совпадало с требованиями, как ему казалось, религии, эта религиозная санкция его решения давала ему полное удовлетворение и отчасти успокоение" (18:298). Karenin's emotional restraint undermines his moral sense, rendering him unable to empathize with Anna as Christian principles would dictate. His actions against Anna reveal his desire for revenge and show that he acts out of self-protection rather than genuine Christian love. Thus, the rigidity of his body (his knuckle cracking) reflects not only his emotional but also moral stiffness—his moral flaw.

However, Karenin's habit of cracking his knuckles, as well as his body's boniness and chilliness, may testify not only to the emotional and spiritual coarseness that renders him cruel towards Anna, but also to his own emotional and physical fragility. The earlier-discussed reference to "collision," which Tolstoi uses to describe Karenin's typical emotional detachment, may also suggest the distress that he experiences when forced to deal with the disorganization of "real life" events. His "collisions" with "real life" seem not only to disorganize his emotional state but also to dislocate his joints, introducing discord in his body's organization and causing him physical discomfort. An episode included only in Tolstoi's earlier *Russkii vestnik* version of the novel²¹ manifestly demonstrates the link between Karenin's dislocated joints and his fragile emotional sphere. Tolstoi associates Karenin's emotional distress with his body's brittleness, comparing Karenin's emotional devastation after learning of Anna's unfaithfulness with his physical breakdown, as if all of his joints have been fractured ("сломаются все суставы тела"). The canonical version only depicts Karenin's emotional state—not the physical manifestation:

²¹ *Anna Karenina* was initially printed in *Russkii vestnik* in 1875–76. The revised version of this edition became the novel's canonical final draft (18:458).

“... когда беда пала на его голову, он не только не думал о том, как развязать это положение, но вовсе не хотел знать его, не хотел знать именно потому, что оно было слишком ужасно, слишком неестественно” (18:213). In the *Russkii vestnik* edition, Tolstoi complements the depiction of Karenin’s emotional state with a bodily metaphor, evoking his joints: “... ничего нельзя придумать, если в дороге сломаются все суставы тела ... Из-за привычного увлечения движением Алексей Александрович не хотел признаться, что он уже разбит вдребезги, хотя во глубине души он чувствовал это” (18:503). Karenin’s bony and chilly body reflects not only his self-absorbed, emotionally and spiritually rigid personality, but also suggests his vulnerability. One can speculate that Tolstoi decided to delete this episode from the final version of the novel precisely because it brings forth Karenin’s vulnerability and suffering. Such a representation of Karenin resonates with Tolstoi’s early plans for the novel, wherein Karenin, rather than Anna, was supposed to be the protagonist—the deceived husband suffering from his dissolute wife’s unfaithfulness. In the final version of the novel, Tolstoi emphasizes Anna’s moral struggle and Karenin’s cruelty, thus introducing psychological complexity and moral ambiguity in the portrayal of both. Although Tolstoi edits out the above episode, thus downplaying Karenin’s vulnerability and suffering because of Anna’s unfaithfulness, his emotional fragility is still evident from Tolstoi’s references to Karenin’s bodily discomfort, such as his habit of cracking his knuckles, and his chilliness, as analyzed below.

Given Karenin’s emotional vulnerability, his inability to empathize with Anna, who has caused him pain, is psychologically understandable—yet not from a moral perspective, as Tolstoi suggests in an episode in the final edition of the novel. Tolstoi shows that Karenin suffers not only because Anna has hurt him, but also because he cannot forgive her in the way that Christian

ethics require. In other words, Karenin yields to his emotions, but these are guided by selfishness rather than by any compassion for Anna. Thus, his irritation with Anna reflects not only his emotional vulnerability but also his lack of genuine faith, which, Tolstoi demonstrates, hurts Karenin himself.

Seized by a desire for vengeance, Karenin ponders Anna's unfaithfulness to him and the happiness that she experiences with Vronskii—despite her moral crime. These thoughts apparently cause him so much emotional turmoil that he groans as if out of “inner pain” and actually changes his position in the carriage (apparently feeling not only emotional but also physical discomfort), which accidentally removes the warm rug from his legs and exposes him to the winter cold, thus causing even more physical discomfort:

А в душе Алексея Александровича, несмотря на полное теперь, как ему казалось, презрительное равнодушие к жене, оставалось в отношении к ней одно чувство — нежелание того, чтоб она беспрепятственно могла соединиться с Вронским, чтобы преступление ее было для нее выгодно. Одна мысль эта так раздражала Алексея Александровича, что, только представив себе это, он замычал от внутренней боли и приподнялся и переменил место в карете и долго после того, нахмуренный, завертывал свои зябкие и костлявые ноги пушистым пледом. (18:297)

Tolstoi juxtaposes Karenin's legs, which are “sensitive to the cold” (“зябкие”), with the warm rug, which he removes accidentally in anger. This episode suggests that Karenin's irritation with Anna worsens his own physical state—miserable as it is. Karenin's physical discomfort, revealed by both his movement inside the carriage and by his chilly legs, suggests that, although his irritation is psychologically understandable under the given circumstances, it is morally wrong. In other words, Karenin's inability to empathize with Anna alienates him from his own body, aggravating, it seems, the pain from his “collision” with real life (i.e. Anna's unfaithfulness).

Tolstoi's reference to the item covering the body (the warm rug) in the description of Karenin's irritation with Anna emphasizes his moral shortcomings. Elsewhere, Tolstoi compares

Levin's religious beliefs with clothes (which are also the items covering the body, just like the rug). Tolstoi associates a lack of faith with thin muslin clothes, which cannot warm a person in winter, and faith with a warm fur coat ("Левин вдруг почувствовал себя в положении человека, который променял бы теплую шубу на кисейную одежду и который в первый раз на морозе несомненно, не рассуждениями, а всем существом своим убедился бы, что он всё равно что голый и что он неминуемо должен мучительно погибнуть" 18:367). Since Karenin's hostility towards his unfaithful wife causes him to move and thus expose his chilly legs rather than warming them, the action reasserts the falsehood of Karenin's psychologically understandable but morally wrong aggression towards Anna. Karenin's inability to empathize with Anna in spite of the pain that she has caused him reveals his lack of genuine faith, which, as is evident from his emotional and physical discomfort, not only undermines his ability to connect with Anna but also harms Karenin himself.

While Tolstoi associates Karenin's restrained emotionality with his body's bony composition, he links his ability to empathize with his "physicality." The earlier-mentioned episode, in which Anna confesses her love for Vronskii, reveals Karenin's inward "physical pity" behind the "lifeless" mask that he puts on while trying to restrain an outbreak of "emotional disturbance" or compassion: "Слова жены, подтвердившие его худшие сомнения, произвели жестокую боль в сердце Алексея Александровича. Боль эта была усилена еще тем странным чувством физической жалости к ней, которую произвели на него ее слезы" (18:294). In other words, Tolstoi expresses Karenin's emotional confusion through the mixed depiction of his body as both internally "physical" and externally "deadened."

The reference to Karenin's heart ("слова жены ... произвели жестокую боль в сердце") as an organ hidden *inside* his body does not seem accidental, and contributes to the

inside–outside opposition describing Karenin’s confused personality. Karenin’s pity for himself seems to struggle with his pity for Anna, but in fact both cause him pain in his *heart*, meaning that his pity for Anna aggravates *his own* suffering (“произвели жестокую боль в сердце Алексея Александровича. Боль эта была усилена еще тем странным чувством физической жалости к ней”). As previously mentioned, Merleau-Ponty’s discussion of “intercorporeality” suggests that, if two bodies are united into an “intercorporeal” whole, one body cannot inflict pain on the other without experiencing that pain itself. Despite his outward alienation from Anna and his cruelty towards her as their confrontation unfolds, Karenin’s “physical pity” for Anna and the pain in his heart suggest his implicit but suppressed “intercorporeal” connection.

Tolstoi also refers to Karenin’s physicality in a scene when he argues with Anna, but his physicality in this episode is violent and alienating, as is his emotion. Shortly before Anna’s childbirth, Karenin, in a fit of rage, rushes into Anna’s room, pushes her away from her drawer, takes a briefcase of her correspondence with Vronskii, and presses her arm into his large (and apparently strong) fingers with such force that her bracelet leaves a red impression on her skin:

- Что вам нужно?! — вскрикнула она.
- Письма вашего любовника, — сказал он.
- Их здесь нет, — сказала она, затворяя ящик; но по этому движению он понял, что угадал верно и, грубо оттолкнув ее руку, быстро схватил портфель, в котором он знал, что она клала самые нужные бумаги. Она хотела вырвать портфель, но он оттолкнул ее. [...]
- Нет! — закричал он своим пискливым голосом, который поднялся теперь еще нотой выше обыкновенного, и, схватив своими большими пальцами ее за руку так сильно, что красные следы остались на ней от браслета, который он прижал, насильно посадил ее на место. (18:383)

Although Karenin’s physique seems to be altered from its typically “lifeless” state, suffused with blood and muscular strength, his physicality in this episode derives from his jealousy and rage rather than compassion. Karenin’s rage is produced by Anna’s violation of his demands (he has accidentally found Vronskii in his house, though he had forbidden Anna to see him), as a desire

to take revenge on her: “Она не исполнила его требования, и он должен наказать ее и привести в исполнение свою угрозу — требовать развода и отнять сына” (18:382). It is hard to pinpoint the exact difference between Karenin’s two bodily physicalities: the reference to his “physical” pity is generally no different from the “physical” force which he applies as he presses Anna’s arm. However, there is a difference on a haptic level—on the level of the “intercorporeal” connection between him and Anna in these two episodes. While Karenin’s pity makes him *feel* the pain of Anna’s suffering, as in the above episode, his rage brings him to *cause* Anna’s pain. In other words, instead of empathizing with Anna’s suffering, he takes revenge on her by transferring his own pain onto Anna’s body, thus causing her to feel his emotional pain physically. Hurting Anna, Karenin does not feel her pain, which, in keeping with Merleau-Ponty’s theory, indicates his alienation from Anna caused by a lack of compassion and pity.

While Karenin does not feel compassion for Anna in this episode, Anna, in fact, *does* empathize with Karenin, albeit for an instant. It is perhaps a stretch to draw a direct connection between Karenin’s pressing Anna’s hand and her feeling of compassion, but the sequence is worth pointing out. As the argument unfolds, after Karenin forcefully presses Anna’s arm into his hand, his typically composed speech fails him and he cannot pronounce the word “suffered” properly (“Вам всё равно, что вся жизнь его рушилась, что он пеле... пеле... пелестрадал” 18:384). His broken speech betrays his loss of control and genuine agony as he tries to cope with his feelings, hesitating between pity for himself and anger for Anna. Noticing Karenin’s agony, Anna—irrationally, given the way that Karenin treats her—feels sorry for him and guilty for the pain that she has caused. Tolstoi points out that Karenin’s broken speech makes Anna believe that he is not as rational and cruel as he seems, but that he *also* has feelings and thus can suffer

and empathize, triggering her pity (“И в первый раз она на мгновение почувствовала за него, перенеслась в него, и ей жалко стало его” 18:384). Since the scene in which Karenin forcefully squeezes Anna’s arm is separated from the scene in which she feels compassion for him, divided by the exchange in which Karenin’s broken speech reveals his agony, it is perhaps possible to view Karenin’s forceful touch on Anna’s arm as a primary stage inciting Anna’s compassion. In other words, when Karenin transfers his pain onto Anna physically, she can eventually sense his pain and come to empathize.

However, these brief instances of Karenin’s agony and Anna’s pity do not lead to the couple’s reconciliation, which Tolstoi shows through their tactile interactions at the end of the episode. Unlike Anna, Karenin remains absorbed in his self-pity and insensitive to his spouse’s sorrow. When he is about to leave, Anna takes his hand and implores him to leave their son, but Karenin flushes in rage, tears his hand away, and leaves: “Алексей Александрович вспыхнул и, вырвав у нее руку, вышел молча из комнаты” (18:384). Karenin’s self-pity prevents him from connecting with Anna and thus undermines their touch.

While Karenin’s fear of “душевное расстройство” (“inner disturbance”) undermines his connection with Anna, he overcomes this alienation when he succumbs to compassion by Anna’s “deathbed.” While Anna is burning up with a post-natal fever, she asks Karenin to visit. On his way, Karenin wishes that Anna would die, because her death would deliver him from the emotional and social troubles that her unfaithfulness has caused him. However, seeing Anna in agony, he finds himself unable to restrain his “душевное расстройство/emotional disturbance,” succumbs to his pity, falls on his knees, *presses* his forehead to Anna’s *burning* arm, and cries like a child:

Душевное расстройство Алексея Александровича всё усиливалось и дошло теперь до такой степени, что он уже перестал бороться с ним; он вдруг почувствовал, что

то, что он считал душевным расстройством, было, напротив, блаженное состояние души, давшее ему вдруг новое, никогда неиспытанное им счастье. Он не думал, что тот христианский закон, которому он всю жизнь свою хотел следовать, предписывал ему прощать и любить своих врагов; но радостное чувство любви и прощения к врагам наполняло его душу. Он стоял на коленях и, положив голову на сгиб ее руки, которая жгла его огнем через кофту, рыдал, как ребенок. (18:434)

Tolstoi associates Karenin's genuine compassion for Anna with his spiritual epiphany, the Christian awakening of a truly "blissful" and "joyful" feeling of love and forgiveness for one's enemies—one which Karenin has never experienced before, despite his formal religiosity. Tolstoi shows that Karenin's epiphany affects not only his emotional state, but his body as well. When Karenin presses his head to Anna's arm, he can feel her burning skin against his forehead ("положив голову на сгиб ее руки, которая жгла его огнем через кофту"). Unlike in the previous episode, wherein Karenin presses Anna's bracelet into her arm, *causing* rather than *sensing* her pain, his sensory susceptibility to Anna's skin in this episode reflects his emotional susceptibility to her suffering. In other words, Karenin's *sensing* reveals his *compassion*.

This episode reverberates with an episode earlier discussed, wherein Karenin feels "physical pity" for Anna in his "heart" after she confesses her love for Vronskii. Both episodes depict Karenin's compassion for Anna. However, Karenin's body appeared "lifeless" even though he felt compassion in his "heart" in the earlier episode. His physical "lifelessness" conceals rather than reveals his compassion for Anna and thus undermines their connection. By contrast, in the current episode, Karenin not only feels compassion for Anna in his "soul" (which can be viewed as a synonym for "heart") but also communicates it through his *body*: kneeling and crying rather than preserving his poise, as well as *touching* Anna's body and *sensing* her skin.

Karenin's manifested compassion results in his and Anna's simultaneous touch. Anna responds to Karenin's touch with her own, embracing his head: "Она обняла его

плешивеющую голову, подвинулась к нему и с вызывающею гордостью подняла вверх глаза” (18:434). Fearing death, Anna admits (or at least tries to, as discussed in the chapter on Anna) her guilt and begs for forgiveness. Karenin, in turn, forgives Anna under the influence of his newly-discovered joy of compassion. Anna’s regret for her misdeed and Karenin’s forgiveness facilitate a temporary unity, reflected in simultaneous touch.

Karenin’s surrender to the empathic aspect of his nature facilitates not only his haptic unity with Anna (however temporary), but also his own bodily transformation. Prompted by the newly-discovered bliss of forgiveness, Karenin forgives and pities everyone (even Anna and Vronskii), regrets that he does not spend enough time with his son, and feels particularly attached—however irrationally—to Anna’s newborn daughter: “Но к новорожденной маленькой девочке он испытывал какое-то особенное чувство не только жалости, но и нежности” (18:141). Karenin’s love for the child, which is not his and should, in theory, remind him of his wife’s unfaithfulness, emphasizes the integration with human community that his discovery of selfless love and forgiveness has allowed.

While Tolstoi conveys the way in which Anna reunites Stiva’s family members through tactile contact, he shows Karenin’s spiritual transformation through his transformed facial musculature. Karenin’s typically rigid body gains elasticity and mobility after his spiritual transformation, which is evident from the episode in which he looks at Anna’s daughter. Tolstoi lingers on Karenin’s changing expression to show how his smile moves his hair and skin (suggesting muscles moving beneath) when he sees the newborn baby: “С минуту он [Каренин] молчал и с тем же унылым лицом смотрел на ребенка; но вдруг улыбка, двинув его волоса и кожу на лбу, выступила ему на лицо, и он так же тихо вышел из комнаты” (18:443).

Although Karenin does not touch the child,²² the flexibility of his moving muscles reflects his emotional response to her, expressing his joy.

Karenin's changed physique—from rigid to pliable—reflects the acquired flexibility of his moral and social judgment. His pity for his “enemies” (Anna and Vronskii) and care for the child (born of his wife's liaison with another man) seem to be irrational, at least from commonly-held social and psychological points of view. However, Karenin finds nothing unnatural in his feelings and is at peace:

Он по несколько раз в день ходил в детскую и подолгу сиживал там, так что кормилица и няня, сперва робевшие пред ним, привыкли к нему. [...] В такие минуты в особенности Алексей Александрович чувствовал себя совершенно спокойным и согласным с собой и не видел в своем положении ничего необыкновенного, ничего такого, что бы нужно было изменить. (18:141)

Karenin's attitude towards his own son also changes under the influence of his spiritual epiphany. Having learned about Anna's infidelity, Karenin begins to feel alienated not only from Anna but also from their son Serēzha, because he reminds him of his unfaithful wife. He even sometimes thinks that Serēzha is not his own. However, after his spiritual awakening, Karenin begins to take an interest in his son's upbringing. He does so in that awkward, typically Kareninian, “rational” manner, drawing advice from pedagogical books instead of simply loving and acting according to his impulse. One of Karenin's educational measures, as Serēzha mentions during Anna's visit on his birthday, is to forbid him to take *cold* showers:

— Как ты одеваешься без меня? Как... — хотела она начать говорить просто и весело, но не могла и опять отвернулась.

— Я не моюсь холодною водой, папа не велел. А Василия Лукича ты не видала? Он придет. А ты села на мое платье!

²² It is hard to say why Karenin does not touch the girl. On the one hand, the fact that he responds to her only through his facial expressions *without* touching her may suggest a certain degree of persisting alienation. The fact that Karenin's transformation is only temporary would corroborate this point. On the other hand, Levin, who apparently comes to love his son after initial repulsion, does not touch the baby either, even though he delights in the way that the infant recognizes Kitty. It is probable that it was not customary for men to physically care for their newborn or for young children. If so, this point would require further investigation into nineteenth-century Russian customs for noblemen's participation in looking after, or at least interacting with, their newborns.

И Сережа расхохотался. Она посмотрела на него и улыбнулась.
— Мама, душечка, голубушка! — закричал он, бросаясь опять к ней и обнимая ее. (19:105)

The detail might well be unintentional on Tolstoi's part, reflecting nothing but Serëzha's childish naivety and spontaneity. He hurries to share all of his news with his long-lost mother, whom he has greatly missed. Yet, if this detail *does* matter as a sensory element, it might suggest that Karenin has warmed up to his son just as he did to Anna's newborn daughter. Karenin, who generally feels uncomfortable with expressing his emotions directly, shows his care and love indirectly by forbidding his son to take cold showers. Since Tolstoi associates coldness with Karenin's emotional restraint and alienation, his interdiction against cold showers may suggest his own transformation and "warming up" to his son, trying to establish a connection with him.

Karenin's spiritual epiphany by Anna's "deathbed" does not resolve the inner conflict between his irrational compassion and his social norms. His feelings of compassion encourage him to sacrifice his self-interest and social reputation for Anna, and to preserve their family, but society, personified by Princess Betsy and Stiva, demands that he grant Anna a divorce. Describing the tension between these two contradictory forces in Karenin's life, Tolstoi uses haptic references—the verb "руководить/guide," which in the original Russian means "to lead by *hand*." The two forces pull Karenin—one can add "by hand"—in opposite directions, depriving him of inner peace: "Он чувствовал, что, кроме благой духовной силы, руководившей его душой, была другая, грубая, столь же или еще более властная сила, которая *руководила* его жизнью, и что эта сила не даст ему того смиренного спокойствия, которого он желал" (emphasis added; 18:441).

Finding himself in a state of acute emotional isolation after Anna leaves him for Vronskii, Karenin bonds with his old friend Lidiia Ivanovna, who takes care of both his

household and his emotional life. However, although Karenin finds emotional consolation in Lidiia, she fails to be Karenin's spiritual guide. The sham spirituality to which she introduces Karenin obstructs rather than promotes the inner spirituality that he had discovered by Anna's "deathbed." Karenin is conflicted about giving Anna a divorce and is in need of guidance. However, since he has become disappointed with both religious dogmatism and spiritual exaltation, he falls prey to Lidiia's sham spiritual mysticism. Lidiia introduces him to a spiritual charlatan, Landau, whose advice Karenin apparently follows. He denies Anna the divorce and thus prevents her from starting a new family with Vronskii, further aggravating her emotional state and social status.

Tolstoi reveals Landau to be a spiritual fraud by referring to his vision, specifically emphasizing his "closed" eyes. During the séance, Karenin references a saying that the one who stays spiritually alert (with his eyes open) is granted spiritual knowledge (light): "— Надо только не закрывать глаз, чтобы не лишиться света, — продолжал Алексей Александрович" (19:314). Ironically, Landau closes his eyes shortly thereafter, when Lidiia begins to read from mystic books: "...сказал с той же улыбкой Landau и закрыл глаза" (19:315). To top it off, Landau even falls asleep (or perhaps pretends to), thus keeping his eyes shut. When Karenin later approaches Landau and touches his hand to receive "guidance," Landau's eyes are closed again. The only person who seems to see and understand the absurdity of the situation is Stiva Oblonskii, who is also present. He observes this scene with his eyes *wide open*, unable to believe that he is not asleep and that what he sees is not a hallucination: "Степан Аркадьич встал тоже и, широко отворяя глаза, желая разбудить себя, если он спит, смотрел то на того, то на другого. Всё это было наяву. Степан Аркадьич чувствовал, что у него в голове становится всё более и более нехорошо" (19:317).

In keeping with Plato's notion of vision as the supreme sense, being the most intellectual and the most spiritual, as well as Karenin's own utterance connecting visual vigilance (open eyes) with spiritual knowledge, Landau's *closed* eyes reveal his spiritual blindness, and therefore reveal his "advice" to Karenin to be a spiritual fraud. Blindly following Landau's advice, Karenin reveals his own moral flaw. His emotional fragility renders him unable to take personal, moral responsibility for Anna's fate, and he resorts to yet another spiritual "truth" instead of following the empathetic impulse that he had discovered by Anna's "deathbed."

Tolstoi associates Karenin's emotional fragility and mental rigidity with physical "fragility" and "rigidity": his "bony" and "chilly" legs, his cracking of his knuckles, his rigid and "lifeless" facial expression. Tolstoi shows that Karenin's fear of empathy causes physical suffering to his "bony" body "sensitive to the cold," as well as undermining his physical contact with Anna. By contrast, Karenin's epiphany by Anna's "deathbed," wherein he finally succumbs to his empathetic impulse, not only reconnects him with Anna but also seems to alter his own physicality. It transforms his body from bony and rigid to pliable, as is evident from Karenin's interactions with Anna's little daughter. The reference to Serēzha's "warm" showers suggest Karenin's own "warming" up, as he tries to become closer with his son. However, Tolstoi's treatment of "vision" in the Lidiia-and-Landau episodes reveals that Karenin's emotional fragility renders him unable to fully sustain the inward joy of forgiveness and love that he had experienced, thus undermining his moral integrity once again as he displaces his responsibility for Anna by blindly following the charlatan's advice instead of acting on his own inner morality.

6. Vronskii

Tolstoi's representation of Vronskii's haptic experiences can be best understood through Plato's mind-body dichotomy. No other character is identified so straightforwardly with his body

as is Vronskii. Since Plato associates the “mind” with spiritual ascension and therefore morality, and the “body” with base, carnal pursuits, this chapter argues that Vronskii’s identification with his body testifies to his immoral, self-absorbed personality, which renders him unable to empathize with others and undermines his ability to connect through touch.

Vronskii experiences a powerful and joyful awareness of his body (“радостное сознание своего тела”) and feels love for “himself”—that is to say, Tolstoi clarifies, for “his body” (“любил себя, своего тела”): “«Хорошо, очень хорошо!» сказал он себе сам. Он и прежде часто испытывал радостное сознание своего тела, но никогда он так не любил себя, своего тела, как теперь” (18:331). Tolstoi associates Vronskii’s bodily self-awareness with two moral flaws: his raw ambition and his carnal love for Anna. The scene, in which Vronskii enjoys his body, takes place after Vronskii’s meeting with his former army friend Sviiazhskii, who, unlike Vronskii, has succeeded significantly in his career. Vronskii envies his friend’s success, but Sviiazhskii pampers his ambition, assuring Vronskii of his importance for the state. The fact that Vronskii is on his way to see Anna also contributes to his delight in life and, consequently, in his body: “воспоминание о дружбе и лести Серпуховского, считавшего его нужным человеком, и, главное, ожидание свидания — всё соединялось в общее впечатление радостного чувства жизни” (18:330).

It does not seem accidental that Vronskii identifies with his body through the “lower” senses of touch (haptic) and smell, according to Plato’s and Aristotle’s hierarchies. He delights in the dull *pain* of his “*strong*” (muscular) leg, the *muscular* movement of his chest as he breathes, the *tingling* of his face and neck after he douses them in water, and the *smell* of brilliantine on his moustache:

... общее впечатление радостного чувства жизни. Чувство это было так сильно, что он невольно улыбался. Он спустил ноги, заложил одну на колено другой и, взяв ее

в руку, ощупал упругую икру ноги, зашибленной вчера при падении, и, откинувшись назад, вздохнул несколько раз всю грудью. ... Ему приятно было чувствовать эту легкую боль в сильной ноге, приятно было мышечное ощущение движений своей груди при дыхании. Тот самый ясный и холодный августовский день, который так безнадежно действовал на Анну, казался ему возбuditельно оживляющим и освежал его разгоревшееся от обливания лицо и шею. Запах брильянтина от его усов казался ему особенно приятным на этом свежем воздухе. (18:331)

Vronskii's bodily awareness testifies to his base rather than intellectual/spiritual predisposition.

Although Levin, too, experiences powerful muscular sensations, he does not derive pleasure from the sensations alone, but rather from the manual work that his muscles accomplish.

Additionally, unlike Vronskii, Levin only enjoys those muscles in his body that are used for work—the muscles in his legs and his arms, but not his chest. Vronskii's pleasure in the movement of his chest muscles suggests his baseness: unlike Levin, who appreciates skill, Vronskii enjoys primitive physiological functions that require none. Finally, while Levin no longer feels his bodily presence when he achieves the summit of spiritual exaltation, as discussed in detail in the respective chapter, Vronskii feels his body with an enhanced acuity, reasserting his carnal rather than moral predisposition.

While Stiva also indulges in the impressions of the “lower” senses of touch, taste, and smell (probing the oysters' texture, smelling a tobacco case or a cambric handkerchief), Vronskii's sensory perception is directed not into the world, but, on the contrary, towards his own body. John Bayley refers to Vronskii's indulgence in bodily sensations as “joyful solipsism” (*Leo Tolstoy* 29). While Stiva's senses immerse him in the texture of physical reality, Vronskii's isolate him from it. Vronskii's sensory perception is “reversible,” to use Merleau-Ponty's term. However, if, in Merleau-Ponty, the “reversibility” of the senses ensures the entwining of all things, Vronskii's senses connect him only with himself. His sensory self-absorption reflects his

“love” for “himself” and, consequently, anticipates both his emotional and sensory insensitivities towards others.

In order to emphasize Vronskii’s baseness, Tolstoi associates him several times with beef—by definition, a flesh devoid of soul/spirit/intellect. Tolstoi establishes the link between Vronskii and beef on two occasions. On the first occasion, Vronskii eats a *beefsteak* before the race as he thinks of arranging a date with Anna at her dacha (18:158). On the second occasion, he mentally calls the depraved prince whom he is ordered to escort “stupid *beef*” (“глупая говядина” 18:374). The latter episode helps reveal the meaning of the former. As will be discussed in more detail, Vronskii undergoes a kind of spiritual awakening between the race scene and the prince episode. Vronskii’s term for the prince (“глупая говядина”) associates beef with the prince’s absent morality and immersion in carnal pleasures. Vronskii’s disapproval for the prince’s conduct, evident in the derogatory term, indicates that Vronskii’s inner transformation enables him not only to recognize the prince’s conduct as immoral but also to loathe it, thus showing that Vronskii dissociates himself from the moral depravity that the prince represents. Therefore, Vronskii’s *eating* beef (flesh without soul/spirit/intellect) in the former episode testifies to his depravity *before* his moral transformation. His pursuit of carnal pleasures regardless of the harm that they may cause (for instance, for Kitty and Anna) reveals his dominating corporeality and lack of moral sense.

Consistent with the dominance of Vronskii’s “lower” senses, Tolstoi describes his “highest” sense of vision as limited. Vronskii is an amateur artist who should have sharp visual perception. However, the way in which Tolstoi describes his sight suggests that he perceives the world not as it is, but as it would be in a framed picture:

Всё, что он видел в окно кареты, всё в этом холодном чистом воздухе, на этом бледном свете заката было так же свежо, весело и сильно, как и он сам: и крыши

домов, блестящие в лучах спускавшегося солнца, и резкие очертания заборов и углов построек, и фигуры изредка встречающихся пешеходов и экипажей, и неподвижная зелень деревьев и трав, и поля с правильно прорезанными бороздами картофеля, и косые тени, падавшие от домов и от деревьев, и от кустов, и от самых борозд картофеля. Всё было красиво, как хорошенький пейзаж, только что оконченный и покрытый лаком. (18:331)

Even though Vronskii's eyes capture reality, and the images that they capture are rich in detail, the carriage's window frame limits his field of vision. What is more, even though Vronskii's carriage has a window, an aperture that has the potential to connect him with the outside world, he perceives the opening not as a lens but as a flat canvas coated with a layer of varnish, producing the impression that the window is sealed. As an artist, Vronskii is an imitator of existing schools and is incapable of painting reality as he sees it in nature. Vronskii's visual perceptions do not connect him to but alienate him from the outside world. In keeping with Plato's conception of vision as a moral sense, Vronskii's visual deficiency suggests moral deficiency. In addition, Tolstoi recurrently associates Vronskii with "shadows." Vronskii appears in the shadows at the train station during Anna's journey from Moscow to Saint Petersburg, so hidden that Anna cannot distinguish his face. Society members also refer to Vronskii as Anna's "shadow" (not only implying that he follows her like a shadow, but also suggesting the shady nature of their relationship). The references to "shadows," which Plato associates with undeveloped knowledge and morality, reinforce Tolstoi's portrayal of Vronskii as a carnal person lacking moral sense.

Vronskii's limited vision is consistent with his corrupted morals. He belongs to a depraved circle of Saint Petersburg's young men, whose "honor code"—with its ideals of elegance, beauty, generosity, bravery, cheerfulness, and passion—propagates rather than restricts immoral conduct:

В его петербургском мире все люди разделялись на два совершенно противоположные сорта. Один низший сорт: пошлые, глупые и, главное, смешные люди, которые веруют в то, что одному мужу надо жить с одною женой, с которою он обвенчан, что девушке надо быть невинною, женщине стыдливою, мужчине мужественным, воздержным и твердым, что надо воспитывать детей, зарабатывать свой хлеб, платить долги, — и разные тому подобные глупости. Это был сорт людей старомодных и смешных. Но был другой сорт людей, настоящих, к которому они все принадлежали, в котором надо быть главное элегантным, красивым, великодушным, смелым, веселым, отдаваться всякой страсти не краснея и над всем остальным смеяться. (18:121)

Tolstoi emphasizes Vronskii's corruption by suggesting that, while his body is physically "clean," it is morally corrupted. When Vronskii returns from Moscow to his apartment in Saint Petersburg, his dissolute acquaintance Baroness Shilton makes the joke that a decent person's worse crime is "uncleanliness" ("нечистоплотность"): "— Ну, теперь прощайте, а то вы [Вронский] никогда не умоетесь, и на моей совести будет главное преступление порядочного человека, нечистоплотность" (18:121). In the original Russian, the word "чистоплотность" ("cleanliness") literally means "clean/pure flesh" ("чистая плоть"). In Russian, "чистый" means both clean and pure, thus lending itself to the juxtaposition of physical and moral cleanliness. In the antique Western philosophical (Plato and Aristotle) and Orthodox Christian traditions, "clean flesh" implies moral purity, suggesting that a person is free from base desires: both those which originate in the body (such as sexual desire or gluttony) and those originating in human personality, which Christianity associates with mankind's fallen (corporeal) state. For instance, Tolstoi includes pride, envy, vanity, and idleness (along with sexual desire) among the vices, as is evident from the diaries and letters discussed in the chapter on his moral vision. Tolstoi's recurring references to Vronskii's *physical* cleanliness (as when he douses himself with water or as when his upbeat mood is compared to feeling refreshed after having taken a bath) emphasize his *moral* "uncleanliness."

Vronskii's thoughtless courtship of Kitty highlights the link between his love for personal hygiene and his moral corruption. Vronskii feels that Kitty's love makes him feel "clean / pure" and "fresh": "«То и прелестно, — думал он, возвращаясь от Щербатских и вынося от них, как и всегда, приятное чувство чистоты и свежести, происходившее отчасти и оттого, что он не курил целый вечер...» (18:62). The first part of Tolstoi's sentence, describing Vronskii's feeling of being "refreshed" and "pure," is intended to persuade the reader that his experience is spiritual. However, Tolstoi undercuts that implication in the second part of the sentence, when he comments (in Vronskii's voice) that Vronskii had not smoked the entire evening and that this had contributed to his feeling of "refreshment" after visiting the Shcherbatskiis. In other words, he is refreshed by the clean air in the house rather than by the family atmosphere of innocence and purity. By using the rhetoric of a spiritual experience to describe Vronskii's physical experience, Tolstoi suggests that Vronskii does not distinguish between the two. Consequently, Vronskii is unable to distinguish the "pleasant" from the "good." He enjoys his courtship of Kitty and calls it "good pleasure" ("хорошее удовольствие"), without realizing the harm that his thoughtlessness causes her:

Если б он мог слышать, что говорили ее родители в этот вечер, если б он мог перенестись на точку зрения семьи и узнать, что Кити будет несчастна, если он не женится на ней, он бы очень удивился и не поверил бы этому. Он не мог поверить тому, что то, что доставляло такое большое и хорошее удовольствие ему, а главное ей, могло быть дурно. (18:62)

The inability to distinguish between right and wrong testifies to Vronskii's moral ignorance.

The self-absorption and corruption reflected in Vronskii's "reversed" sensory perception and love for bodily hygiene undermine his ability to establish unity with another being (animal or person). The steeplechase scene gives perhaps the most explicit example of how Vronskii's self-absorption undermines his touch. In racing, apart from dexterity, strength, and endurance, an

equestrian's success depends on his ability to use physical contact to coordinate his movements with his horse's (tactile perception), as well as his capacity to orient himself properly in space to direct his horse as it moves among competitors and overcomes obstacles (proprioceptive perception).

Vronskii and Frou-Frou's movements, while a bit rough at the beginning, are well-coordinated throughout the race. In fact, their movements become synchronized so perfectly that it seems that they share a kind of telepathic connection—or, to use Merleau-Ponty's term, have become a single “intercorporeal” whole. Frou-Frou predicts Vronskii's intentions so accurately that he need not urge her onwards. When Vronskii thinks that they should get ahead of their competitor Makhotin, Frou-Frou—having understood Vronskii's thoughts, as Tolstoi writes—speeds up. When Vronskii thinks that it is better to pass Makhotin on the outside, Frou-Frou switches her lead and goes around the other horse as Vronskii had imagined. Both Vronskii and Frou-Frou experience brief doubt before one of the obstacles, but both overcome it simultaneously, and the horse conquers the obstacle with flair:

В то самое мгновение, как Вронский подумал о том, что надо теперь обходить Махотина, сама Фру-Фру, поняв уже то, что он подумал, безо всякого поощрения, значительно наддала и стала приближаться к Махотину с самой выгодной стороны, со стороны веревки. ... Вронский только подумал о том, что можно обойти и извне, как Фру-Фру переменила ногу и стала обходить именно таким образом. [...] Вместе с Фру-Фру он еще издали видел эту банкетку, и вместе им обоим, ему и лошади, пришло мгновенное сомнение. Он заметил нерешимость в ушах лошади и поднял хлыст, но тотчас же почувствовал, что сомнение было неосновательно: лошадь знала, что нужно. (18:209)

Their perfect coordination and smooth movements among the competitors and through the obstacles suggest the perfect work of their haptic (tactile and proprioceptive) perception, putting them in the race's lead.

However, Vronskii's ambition interferes with their synchronization. Although Vronskii is winning the race, he wants to come in a *long* first. He urges Frou-Frou onwards with the reins, until she is galloping so quickly that he nearly *stops feeling* how they move. He can only judge their speed by observing that he has become closer to the ground and sensing that the horse's movements have become smoother. In other words, Frou-Frou's acceleration leads to Vronskii's disorientation, undermining his haptic perception. When Frou-Frou jumps over the last and simplest obstacle, Vronskii accidentally makes an inaccurate move, landing on the horse's back earlier than he is supposed to and breaking her spine: "в это самое время Вронский, к ужасу своему, почувствовал, что, не поспев за движением лошади, он, сам не понимая как, сделал скверное, непростительное движение, опустившись на седло" (18:210). Tolstoi emphasizes that Vronskii's self-love, which fuels his ambition, is immoral. Interfering with his haptic perception and undermining his ability to synchronize with Frou-Frou, it leads not only to Vronskii's loss of the race but also to Frou-Frou's death, as she is put down shortly afterwards.

Vronskii's love for himself is stronger than his alleged love for Frou-Frou. One can perhaps notice the signs of their alienation even before the race. It is true that Vronskii looks at Frou-Frou with admiration and tenderness: he gazes at the strong muscles showing through her thin satin-smooth skin ("Вронский опять невольно обнял одним общим взглядом все стати своей любимой лошади. ... Резко выступающие мышцы из-под сетки жил, растянутой в тонкой, подвижной и гладкой, как атлас, коже, казались столь же крепкими, как кость" 18:191). Interacting with Frou-Frou, Vronskii perceives *her* body rather than *his*, which suggests that his attention is directed to the horse rather than to his own ego. He can sense and partake in Frou-Frou's excitement before the race: his blood rushes to his heart, and he wants to move and bite, like Frou-Frou: "Волнение лошади сообщилось и Вронскому; он чувствовал, что кровь

приливали ему к сердцу и что ему так же, как и лошади, хочется двигаться, кусаться; было и страшно и весело” 18:192). In turn, Frou-Frou tries to catch him by his sleeve, reciprocating Vronskii’s touch with her own attempt (“Вронский погладил ее крепкую шею, поправил на остром загривке перекинувшуюся на другую сторону прядь гривы ... Она ... вытянула крепкую черную губу ко Вронскому, как бы желая поймать его за рукав” 18:192). Vronskii and Frou-Frou’s mutual touch and shared excitement suggest their unity.

However, it does not seem accidental that Vronskii perceives the richest tactile impressions of his horse’s body through his *vision* (“обнял одним общим взглядом ... резко выступающие мышцы из-под сетки жил, растянутой в тонкой, подвижной и гладкой, как атлас, коже”). When he touches Frou-Frou, stroking her “strong” neck and fixing the mane on her “sharp” withers, his tactile impressions are not as rich as his visual impressions (“Вронский погладил ее крепкую шею, поправил на остром загривке перекинувшуюся на другую сторону прядь гривы...” 18:192). According to Montagu, it is touch rather than vision that is the most intimate of the senses. As was previously discussed, Stiva strokes his beloved daughter’s neck but only looks at his son, whom he loves less. The subtlety of Vronskii’s *visual* rather than *tactile* perceptions as he examines and admires Frou-Frou suggests his emotional alienation from her, despite his admiration of her physical strength and subtle form.

As with his morality, Vronskii’s ambition also taints his love for Frou-Frou. Although she is a horse and not a human, she is a living being who deserves no less respect and care than a person. In fact, Tolstoi emphasizes her “humanity” by referring to her intelligence and her “speaking” gaze (“Она была одно из тех животных, которые, кажется, не говорят только потому, что механическое устройство их рта не позволяет им этого” 18:192; “смотрела на хозяина своим говорящим взглядом” 18:211). Though it seems that Vronskii loves his horse,

his love is contingent on her successful performance and therefore on his self-interest. The outcome of the race reveals the flaw in Vronskii's affection for Frou-Frou. His tenderness grows along with his confidence in his victory: "теперь он был уверен в успехе. Волнение его, радость и нежность к Фру-Фру всё усиливались" (18:209), thus suggesting that his tenderness for Frou-Frou is not unconditional. Once Vronskii falls, he sees his competitor Makhotin racing past him. Driven by his ambition to continue the race, Vronskii cruelly kicks Frou-Frou with his boot and pulls at the reins, trying to force her onto her legs: "С изуродованным страстью лицом, бледный и с трясущеюся нижнею челюстью, Вронский ударил ее каблуком в живот и опять стал тянуть за поводья" (18:210). Vronskii's frustrated ambition not only destroys his unity with Frou-Frou, but renders his touch violent. Vronskii can see only *his* failure and frustration and does not see *his horse's* physical suffering. Tolstoi suggests that not only Frou-Frou but also Vronskii is "injured." However, while Frou-Frou's injury is physical, Vronskii's "damage" is moral: when he hits Frou-Frou, his face is "disfigured with passion" ("изуродованным страстью лицом"). While Vronskii admires his horse's beauty and performance so long as she satisfies his ambition, he not only disregards but also exacerbates her pain once she can no longer serve him.

Vronskii leaves the racetrack in sorrow and frustration, but the ambiguous way in which Tolstoi renders Vronskii's feelings makes it impossible to conclude if the character is upset for losing the race or breaking his horse's back: "— Ааа! — промычал Вронский, схватившись за голову. — Ааа! что я сделал! — прокричал он. — И проигранная скачка! И своя вина, постыдная, непростительная! И эта несчастная, милая, погубленная лошадь! — Ааа! что я сделал!" (18:211). The ambiguity of Vronskii's feelings shows his moral ambiguity. The fact that he cannot conceive of the gravity of moral injury to a living being (whom, furthermore, he

claims he loves), and cannot distinguish it from his vexation for losing the race, testifies to his moral degeneration. In addition, even if one accepts Vronskii's genuine sorrow for Frou-Frou, his speedy recovery suggests that this "sorrow" is extremely short-lived, as is any sense of responsibility for Frou-Frou's injury. He recovers from his frustration in just half an hour's time and, the next day, seems to recall the event as if in the distant past.

Vronskii's haptic memory in Vrede's garden, the aforementioned episode that takes place the morning after, reasserts Vronskii's deficient moral sense. As was discussed in the chapter on Stiva, Stiva's smile preserves the memory of his misdeed and triggers his recollection, interrupting his gustatory delights, upsetting him, and quickly wiping the smile from his face. Stiva's haptic memory testifies to his moral sense, however rudimentary. Unlike Stiva's body, Vronskii's preserves no upsetting memories of the race. On the contrary, he delights in his body and even in the pain in his leg, which he hurt the day before during the fall: "ощупал упругую икру ноги, зашибленной вчера при падении. ... Ему приятно было чувствовать эту легкую боль в сильной ноге" (18:331). Tolstoi introduces a hundred-page gap between the steeplechase episode and this episode, which takes place the next day. Not unusually for the novel, which frequently intertwines two plot lines and switches between locations, this gap gives the reader the false impression that there is a significant time gap between these two events, which naturally allows Vronskii to forget the steeplechase incident and carelessly delight in his pain without any recollection of his horse's death. Vronskii's mood also shifts from frustration after the race to a "joyful sense of life" ("радостное чувство жизни") the next day, so radically that it reinforces the impression of a significant temporal interval between these two episodes. The pain in Vronskii's leg not only leaves his "joyful sense of life" intact, but rather contributes to it: "впечатление радостного чувства жизни [...] радостное сознание своего тела [...] ощупал

упругую икру ноги, зашибленной вчера при падении [...] Ему приятно было чувствовать эту легкую боль в сильной ноге” (18:331). Vronskii’s haptic forgetfulness reflects his moral ignorance.

Vronskii also manifests his typically self-absorbed personality in his relationship with Anna. In this regard, Frou-Frou can be viewed as a surrogate for Anna. Just as Vronskii’s ambitious pursuit of victory renders him insensitive to his horse’s movements and causes mortal injury, his persistently thoughtless pursuit of Anna renders him insensitive to her feelings and results in her ruin. The way in which Tolstoi refers to Vronskii’s “trembling jaw” (“с трясущеюся нижнею челюстью” 18:210; “с дрожащею нижнею челюстью” 18:157), depicting his bewilderment both as he stands by his injured horse and as he tries to calm Anna after their first act of intercourse, reinforces the association. Since Vronskii’s body is morally “unclean,” and since he perceives reality through the “lower” base senses, his love for Anna can only be carnal—self-absorbed and possessive rather than spiritually selfless and sacrificial (like Levin and Kitty’s). When Vronskii becomes acquainted with Anna on the train in Moscow, he is immediately attracted to her. However, Vronskii’s attraction to Anna manifests itself not as the innocent admiration for her beauty but rather as an envious and possessive urge to belong with her. Consistent with his corrupted morals, which encourage him to act on his passions, Vronskii disregards the fact that Anna is married with a son and does not consider pursuing her to be inappropriate.

Tolstoi reveals Vronskii’s desire to belong with Anna through his envious gaze and touch. The gaze as well as the touch can be viewed as haptic elements in this scene, since Vronskii does not simply look at Anna but observes how she *touches* her brother Stiva. Anna touches Stiva twice during the scene. First, she leaves the train car to greet him at the railway

station. Vronskii watches Anna from the car: he sees how she approaches her brother and throws her arm around his neck. The resolve and gracefulness of the gesture stun Vronskii and cause him to smile with admiration: “она движением, поразившим Вронского своею решительностью и грацией, обхватила брата левою рукой за шею, быстро притянула к себе и крепко поцеловала. Вронский, не спуская глаз, смотрел на нее и, сам не зная чему, улыбался” (18:67). When Anna returns to the car to say goodbye to Mme. Vronskaia, Vronskii’s mother, with whom she traveled in the same car, she shakes hands with him as well. Vronskii seems to perceive their formal handshake personally: he registers the haptic qualities of her hand, its strong, brave, energetic movement. Moreover, he perceives these qualities of her hand as something “special,” and this gives him joy: “как чему-то особенному, обрадовался тому энергическому пожатию, с которым она крепко и смело тряхнула его руку” 18:68). It is possible that Vronskii is delighted to touch Anna because touch is a more intimate form of interaction than vision. He can now personally experience the strength and energy of her hand—something that he could have only observed when Anna hugged her brother. Vronskii seems to think that the handshake has established a kind of intimate connection. The next time that Anna leaves the car to join her brother, leaning on his arm and chatting cheerfully, Vronskii suddenly regrets that their conversation has nothing to do with him: “В окно он видел, как она подошла к брату, положила ему руку на руку и что-то оживленно начала говорить ему, очевидно о чем-то не имеющем ничего общего с ним, с Вронским, и ему это показалось досадным” (18:68). Vronskii’s “досада” (regret, frustration) reflects his envy of Stiva and Anna’s intimate bond, which does not include him (“ничего общего с ним”).

Vronskii’s envy of Anna’s intimate bond with Stiva becomes possessive after their brief conversation in the blizzard, on their way from Moscow to Saint Petersburg. Vronskii reads the

struggle in Anna's face suggesting her attraction. When he returns to his car, he feels like a tsar—a status that represents being in the center and in control: “Вронский ничего и никого не видал. Он чувствовал себя царем, не потому, чтоб он верил, что произвел впечатление на Анну, — он еще не верил этому, — но потому, что впечатление, которое она произвела на него, давало ему счастье и гордость” (18:110).

Tolstoi ridicules Vronskii, while also reminding the reader of his moral degeneration, when he mentions that Vronskii has “forgotten” about Anna's husband and is particularly perplexed when he watches Karenin take Anna's hand with an air of propriety: “«Ах, да! муж!» Теперь только в первый раз Вронский ясно понял то, что муж было связанное с нею лицо. ... он увидал, как этот муж с чувством собственности спокойно взял ее руку” (18:112). Given that the scene is conveyed through Vronskii's eyes, it is possible that Karenin's gesture is not as possessive as Vronskii interprets it to be. Since Vronskii believes that he alone has the right to love Anna (“Он только за собой признавал несомненное право любить ее” 18:112), he views Karenin as his rival and apparently reads his own desire for Anna's possession into Karenin's gesture. Vronskii's love for Anna is self-centered, envious, and possessive—therefore, insensitive.

Although Vronskii strives for unity with Anna, he does so by interfering with her existing bonds, reflecting carnal love's general nature according to Tolstoi. Although examples of Vronskii's interferences with Anna's existing bonds are discussed in detail in the chapter on Anna, one more example may be added. In Moscow, when Anna enters the carriage with Stiva and they talk about the tragic death of a watchman under the train, Anna suddenly interrupts to ask about Vronskii. When Stiva responds with the hope that Vronskii will marry Kitty, Anna lingers, shaking her head as if trying to physically drive away something that has bothered her:

— А ты давно знаешь Вронского? — спросила она.
— Да. Ты знаешь, мы надеемся, что он женится на Кити.
— Да? — тихо сказала Анна. — Ну, теперь давай говорить о тебе, — прибавила она, встряхивая головой, как будто хотела физически отогнать что-то лишнее и мешавшее ей. (18:70)

The “something” that Anna is trying to drive away seems to be her surfacing attraction to Vronskii, who is both “something superfluous” (“лишнее”) and a source of “disturbance” (“мешавшее”). While Vronskii’s interference in this episode may seem insignificant, as it only interrupts the course of Anna’s conversation with Stiva, his selfish pursuit of Anna severs her connections with countless others (almost everyone *but* Stiva), leaving her in a state of acute emotional isolation.

Vronskii’s insensitivity is also reflected in the instance of his self-kiss on his hand. Although this episode was analyzed in the chapter on Anna, it is worthwhile to elaborate on Tolstoi’s representation of Vronskii in this episode. During Princess Betsy’s party, Anna casts a loving gaze on Vronskii, thus non-verbally confessing her love. When Vronskii escorts Anna to her carriage, he kisses her hand goodbye and feels that her gaze and touch burn him through: “Ее взгляд, прикосновение руки прожгли его” (18:149). While Vronskii had earlier sensed Anna’s hand, with its strong and energetic movements, when shaking hands after they first became acquainted, he now feels his own body when he kisses Anna’s hand goodbye. While the former episode suggests Vronskii’s attention to Anna’s body, the latter episode highlights his self-absorption: he registers sensations of his own body but not of Anna’s. Anna’s touch increases Vronskii’s bodily self-awareness. When Tolstoi wants to emphasize instances when touch facilitates unity, he switches perspectives between the characters who touch (for instance, Stiva and his daughter, or Anna and her son) in order to reveal the sensations of both parties and thus the reciprocity of their touch. In this scene, Tolstoi only shows Vronskii’s perspective,

reinforcing the impression that Vronskii is only concerned with his own bodily sensations and the joy of being loved.

The burning fervor that Vronskii feels when his romantic interest “looks at”/touches him is perhaps typical of any romantic relationship, as is the subsequent gesture of kissing his hand on the spot where Anna has touched it (“Он поцеловал свою ладонь в том месте, где она тронула его” 18:149). However, Tolstoi’s choice of Vronskii’s own hand, rather than any *external* memento of his and Anna’s shared touch, seems to be symptomatic of Vronskii’s self-centered personality and is consistent with his (“reversible”) sensory delight in his own body (discussed at the beginning of this chapter). While kissing his own hand, Vronskii not only thinks of his love for Anna while delighting in the notion that these feelings are shared, but also evidently relishes in the successful pursuit. Instead of meditating on their feelings (as a person in love would most likely do), he thinks about the “goal” that he has achieved that evening: “Он поцеловал свою ладонь в том месте, где она тронула его, и поехал домой, счастливый сознанием того, что в нынешний вечер он приблизился к достижению своей цели более, чем в два последние месяца” (18:150). Vronskii’s rejoicing in securing Anna’s favor testifies to his self-interest.

Tolstoi also reinforces Vronskii’s corporeal rather than spiritual predisposition by describing his intercourse with Anna as a murder with necrophilic overtones. It is true that the reference to murder reflects Tolstoi’s disapproval of sexuality, and especially his disapproval when sexual drives are satisfied outside of the marital bond. Tolstoi describes the couple’s kisses and caresses in a repugnant manner—the “jumping on,” “cutting,” and “hiding” of the corpse. Yet, the murder metaphor is also a commentary on Vronskii. Vronskii compares himself to a murderer, his intercourse with Anna with an act of murder, and the first period of their romance

as a corpse: “Он же чувствовал то, что должен чувствовать убийца, когда видит тело, лишенное им жизни. Это тело, лишенное им жизни, была их любовь, первый период их любви” (18:157). Furthermore, Vronskii also thinks of Anna’s body as a corpse that he “uses” nonetheless: “Но, несмотря на весь ужас убийцы пред телом убитого, надо резать на куски, прятать это тело, надо пользоваться тем, что убийца приобрел убийством” (18:158). Vronskii’s “necrophilic” tendencies in the scene reveal him as someone who is plunged in the midst of the corporeal and devoid of the spiritual.

As was discussed in the chapter on Anna, Tolstoi emphasizes the alienating nature of Vronskii’s touch by showing how the consummation of the couple’s passion leads to Anna’s acute sense of shame and isolation, with Vronskii’s hand/touch remaining her only possession: “Она держала его руку и не шевелилась. Да, эти поцелуи — то, что куплено этим стыдом. Да, и эта одна рука, которая будет всегда моею, — рука моего сообщника” (18:158). Though Vronskii admires Anna, he chases her as if their romance were little more than a competition, delighting in his victory. His selfish and persistent pursuit of Anna reasserts his inability to distinguish between love and ambition. Vronskii’s intertwined passion and drive render him superficial, unable to understand either the consequences of his pursuit or Anna’s feelings as the object of that pursuit. For instance, he cannot understand Anna’s moral devastation after their first act of intercourse, or why Anna cannot be entirely satisfied with their passion and cannot leave her son as their relationship evolves. Vronskii’s superficiality contributes to the couple’s inner divisions, even as they are united physically.

Nonetheless, Vronskii does not always act out of self-interest. His relationship with Anna transforms him and awakens his ability to empathize. A scene taking place during their meeting in Vrede’s garden reveals the process of his transformation. The scene begins by demonstrating

Vronskii's typical self-centeredness, which is reflected in his distinctively "reversible," body-centric sensory perceptions. When Vronskii sees Anna, her appearance excites him and stimulates his bodily self-awareness. He feels as if an electrical charge runs through him, filling his body with a "new force" flowing from his resilient legs to his breathing lungs, even tickling his lips: "тотчас же будто электрический ток пробежал по его телу. Он с новой силой почувствовал самого себя, от упругих движений ног до движения легких при дыхании, и что-то защекотало его губы" (18:331). However, when Anna bursts into tears as she shares Karenin's decision to take away her son, her emotions suddenly move him, and Vronskii unexpectedly—perhaps even for himself—empathizes: "Он не мог бы сказать, что именно так тронуло его; ему было жалко ее" (18:334). Tolstoi describes the way in which Vronskii senses Anna's grief as "touch" ("тронуло его"). Although Tolstoi uses the verb "тронуть/touch" only figuratively, to express Vronskii's receptiveness to Anna's emotions, the verb produces the impression of an invisible but corporeal bond surfacing between them, as if joining them into one "intercorporeal" whole. *Vronskii's* sensory perception responds to *her* distress, revealing his compassion: Vronskii feels something rising in his throat, tickling his nose, and for the first time feels ready to cry. "Он почувствовал тоже, что что-то поднимается к его горлу, щиплет ему вносу, и он первый раз в жизни почувствовал себя готовым заплакать" (18:334).

Anna seems to evoke not only Vronskii's compassion but also his moral sense. His sensory response to Anna's distress reveals that his carnal passion has developed into a deeper emotional connection, in which he has overcome his self-centeredness and undergone a moral awakening. Apart from feeling sorry for Anna and wishing to help her, Vronskii also realizes that he had done something *wrong*, that *he* is to be blamed for Anna's suffering: "ему было жалко ее, и он чувствовал, что не может помочь ей, и вместе с тем знал, что он виною ее

несчастья, что он сделал что-то нехорошее” (18:334). Vronskii finally recognizes the importance of Anna’s son—something that he had not understood in the past. He asks Anna if she could possibly take her son *with* her upon leaving Karenin: “Разве нельзя взять сына и всё-таки оставить его [Каренина]?” (18:335).

Vronskii’s inability to name these sensations and feelings precisely (“*что-то* поднимается к его горлу”, “сделал *что-то* нехорошее”; emphasis added) reflects the novelty of his moral experience, and thus his persistently poor understanding of what morality is. In his case, it derives from his sensory perception. The fact that Vronskii’s body responds to Anna’s distress before his mind does, testifies to the *physical* rather than *intellectual/spiritual* nature of his moral sense, thus suggesting its limitations. Vronskii cannot completely overcome his self-centeredness, contributing to the tension in his relationship and aggravating his discord with Anna.

Although Vronskii undergoes a moral awakening, this does not lead to the complete transformation of his personality. His ambition and passion continue to dominate his mindset. On her “deathbed,” Anna tries to repent, recognizing Karenin’s moral superiority and begging for his forgiveness. She does so also on Vronskii’s behalf. As she does this, she asks Karenin to take Vronskii’s hands away from his face, as Vronskii has been hiding his face in his hands. When Karenin fulfills her request, Vronskii feels gravely ashamed. The moral superiority and generosity of Anna’s husband, whom Vronskii had viewed as a ridiculous figure according to his former honor code, stuns and humiliates him: “Роли вдруг изменились. Вронский чувствовал его высоту и свое унижение, его правоту и свою неправду. Он почувствовал, что муж был великодушен и в своем горе, а он низок, мелочен в своем обмане” (18:437). In addition, once Vronskii realizes that he has lost Anna, his passion for her suddenly escalates and

aggravates his suffering. Losing Anna and suffering humiliation from her husband, Vronskii loses the two driving forces that have comprised his life's meaning: his passion and his ambition.

The fact that ambition and passion are the most powerful triggers for Vronskii's bodily self-awareness ("радостное сознание своего тела") suggests that he believes that these alone comprise his life's meaning. It is not accidental, then, that having lost his life's only value, Vronskii strives for physical annihilation and attempts suicide:

Мысль его быстро обежала жизнь вне его любви к Анне.
«Честолюбие? Серпуховской? Свет? Двор?» Ни на чем он не мог остановиться.
Всё это имело смысл прежде, но теперь ничего этого уже не было. [...]
«Разумеется», повторил он, когда в третий раз мысль его направилась опять по тому же самому заколдованному кругу воспоминаний и мыслей, и, приложив револьвер к левой стороне груди и сильно дернувшись всей рукой, как бы вдруг сжимая ее в кулак, он потянул за гашетку. (18:439)

Vronskii's attempted suicide can be viewed as a form of self-touch, consistent with his typically self-centered personality. While his genuine compassion for Anna helps him overcome his preoccupation with himself, his hurt pride and humiliation as he loses her aggravate his self-absorption. Although Vronskii *does* recognize his past ambitions as being of false value, he undergoes no epiphany and acquires no insight into the meaning of his life or of life in general (unlike Levin, who seeks and finds the meaning of life in the world of nature and human community, even when Kitty temporarily rejects him). Unlike Levin, Vronskii has no pursuits extending beyond his own personality or, one can say, his own body, given that Tolstoi equates the two in Vronskii's case. Since Vronskii's pursuits are body- and self-centered, their failure results in an attempt to destroy both—the body and the self. Vronskii's self-touch—be it pleasurable or destructive—testifies to the immoral nature of his self-centeredness, which causes harm not only to others but also to Vronskii himself.

Vronskii's haptic interactions with Anna reveal that his emerging morality battles but never overcomes his preoccupation with himself. On the one hand, Vronskii sympathizes with Anna, takes responsibility for her life, and sacrifices his military career for her. He shows compassion and patience with her, even when she (unfairly) accuses him of unfaithfulness and torments him with obstinate jealousy and antagonism. Despite the tensions between them, Vronskii is capable of yielding to Anna's wishes. He initiates reconciliation with her in the course of one of their numerous arguments. When he returns home from a party later than Anna had expected, she reproaches him for being insensitive to her hardship, leaving her alone while enjoying his social freedom. Anna's reproach initiates their argument; however, after a brief exchange of caustic remarks, Vronskii pauses and opens his hand for her to take, unwilling to continue fighting: "— Анна, зачем, зачем? — сказал он после минуты молчания, перегибаясь к ней, и открыл руку, надеясь, что она положит в нее свою" (19:283). Vronskii's insensitivity and Anna's jealousy cause an emotional gap between them, reflected in the corporeal space that separates them. Vronskii's open hand reflects an invitation to unity, an effort to bridge that gap.

As Vronskii tries to establish his unity with Anna by opening his hand, Anna rejects the gesture, undermining their touch and thus their unity. Although Anna is glad of his "invitation to tenderness" ("вызову к нежности") and wants to respond to it ("отдаться своему влечению"), she feels that "some strange power of evil" ("какая-то странная сила зла") will not allow her to reciprocate. Despite her genuine tenderness, Anna is unwilling to yield and lose the argument, to admit that her jealousy and accusations may be unfounded. Driven by her desire to win, Anna does not take Vronskii's hand, giving him a bitter answer once again. So, he closes his hand and moves away: "Рука его закрылась, он отклонился, и лицо его приняло еще более, чем

прежде, упорное выражение” (19:283). His closed hand suggests his withdrawal from Anna, leaving them as isolated entities, with an unbridged (and, ultimately, unbridgeable) gap between them.

Vronskii’s moral awakening pushes him to act outside of his “honor code,” taking genuine care of Anna and even initiating reconciliation with her, trying to establish unity between them. However, Vronskii is unwilling to give up his social freedom and continues enjoying the luxuries of his social life, of which Anna is deprived, inciting her jealousy and aggravating their conflict. Although it is true that Anna is to be blamed for the failure of Vronskii’s attempt at reconciliation, it is also true that Vronskii, for all his sacrifices, remains insensitive to Anna’s needs. Drawing a comparison between Vronskii-Anna’s and Levin-Kitty’s relationships, Tolstoi shows that Levin is willing to give up his hunting for Kitty’s comfort, and that it is this sensitivity to Kitty’s wishes that consolidates their unity. Despite his efforts, Vronskii remains insensitive to Anna’s social and emotional isolation, unwilling to sacrifice his interests for her as Levin does for Kitty. Anna and Vronskii’s inability to achieve reconciliation reflects the nature of their carnal love, which causes the attraction-repulsion in their relationship and between their hands.

While Anna severs their touch and thus their chance for reconciliation in the episode described above, Vronskii does the same a bit later. Tolstoi shows that while, despite Vronskii and Anna’s arguments, Vronskii is capable of feeling compassion for Anna’s suffering, his compassion is not strong enough to override his irritation. When Vronskii, annoyed by Anna’s unreasonable obstinacy, is about to leave the room, he for a moment thinks that Anna has said something and is suddenly struck by compassion. He lingers, inviting Anna to share her concerns, but when she stubbornly refuses to do so, he exits the room as he had intended.

However, upon leaving, he notices her pale face and quivering lips in the mirror. He wants to comfort her again, but before he can come up with anything to say, his legs carry him out as if driven by inertia:

«Я ни в чем не виноват пред нею, — думал он. Если она хочет себя наказывать, tant pis pour elle». Но, выходя, ему показалось, что она сказала что-то, и сердце его вдруг дрогнуло от сострадания к ней.

— Что, Анна? — спросил он.

— Я ничего, — отвечала она так же холодно и спокойно.

«А ничего, так tant pis», подумал он, опять похолодев, повернулся и пошел. Выходя, он в зеркало увидал ее лицо, бледное, с дрожащими губами. Он и хотел остановиться и сказать ей утешительное слово, но ноги вынесли его из комнаты, прежде чем он придумал, что сказать. (19:329–30)

In this last section of the scene, Tolstoi contrasts Vronskii's compassionate vision with his neglectful haptic perception (that is, his *seeing* Anna's suffering in the mirror to his *feeling* his legs carry him out of the room).

As previously discussed, Vronskii's vision fails to connect him with the external world in the carriage scene, when he sees the world only as a framed picture. Likewise, Vronskii's visual (as opposed to tactile) perception of Frou-Frou reflects his emotional alienation, despite his admiration of her form. In both of these scenes, Vronskii's visual perception suggests his limited moral sense. However, in *this* scene, Vronskii's vision is associated with his compassion, thus reasserting his moral awakening. Nonetheless, Vronskii's vision here is indirect: he notices Anna's upset face not when he looks at her, but when he looks at her reflection in the mirror. His indirect gaze suggests his alienation from Anna despite his compassion—his lack of determination to reach out to her, and thus his limited ability to connect. The inertia of Vronskii's legs (his haptic perception) overrides—or rather outruns—his moral impulse for compassion, which suggests that Vronskii's selfish antagonism eventually prevails over any selfless moral sense.

By portraying Vronskii's bodily self-awareness, Tolstoi points to Vronskii's self-centeredness and overbearing ambition, which render him insensitive and undermine his ability to connect. During the race, Vronskii's ambition confuses his proprioceptive perception and interrupts his perfectly synchronized movements with his horse, leading to his loss and Frou-Frou's death. Vronskii's physical "cleanliness" reflects his moral corruption, which is also suggested by his limited vision. Vronskii's ambition and corrupted honor code undermine his ability to connect with Anna: her love for him enhances his bodily self-awareness, which reflects his joy but simultaneously reasserts his self-absorption and neglect of the consequences that his thoughtless courtship has on Anna's life. Although Vronskii does undergo a moral awakening when his senses respond to Anna's distress, and he does try to take care of her, he often remains insensitive to her feelings, unable to yield his interests to hers—exacerbating their alienation from one another and preventing them from achieving unity.

7. Koznyshev and Varen'ka

Unlike Levin and Kitty, Sergei Koznyshev and Varen'ka demonstrate another example of unsuccessful unity. This brief section analyzes both characters to show how their haptic experiences reflect their alienation from life's corporeal layer, which consequently undermines their chance to establish a union.

Koznyshev is a philosopher-idealist whose "idealism" reflects his disbelief in the world's material foundations. Koznyshev's philosophical idealism is reflected in the way in which he interacts with the world—particularly with the world of nature, which Tolstoi seems to view as the epitome of material/corporeal life. Tolstoi portrays Koznyshev vis-à-vis Levin, thus emphasizing the brothers' opposing ways of interacting with nature. While Levin interacts with

the world of nature through his muscles, dexterity, and sweat, Koznyshev only brushes *against* it without *immersing* himself through corporeal force.

A fishing episode provides perhaps the best example of Koznyshev's alienation from nature. When Koznyshev decides to go fishing, he does not want to walk and asks Levin to take him by carriage instead. Through his unwillingness to walk, Koznyshev avoids using his muscular strength and uses an intermediary (a carriage) in its place. Tolstoi also shows that Koznyshev avoids physical contact with nature when he refuses to walk through wet grass to reach the riverbank. Although Koznyshev is comfortable with sunbathing or lounging on the bank, he is physically uncomfortable with touching the wet grass, so his contact with nature is superficial, limited to pleasant experiences that do not require him to challenge his physical abilities or personal hygiene. His contact with the road and with the grass is indirect, mediated through the carriage.

Being alienated from the world of nature, Koznyshev even causes it harm, interfering with its reproductive forces (though inadvertently and only on a minor scale). As the carriage moves through the grass, it pulls seeds from the earth as they stick to the wheels (presumably, to be wasted: crushed or left elsewhere on uncultivated earth). Koznyshev's selfish and carefree treatment of nature apparently causes Levin much distress, as Tolstoi's wistful tone in his depiction of the seeds on the carriage wheels seems to suggest:

Утренняя роса еще оставалась внизу на густом подседе травы, и Сергей Иванович, чтобы не мочить ноги, попросил довести себя по лугу в кабриолете до того ракитового куста, у которого брались окуни. Как ни жалко было Константину Левину мять свою траву, он въехал в луг. Высокая трава мягко обвивалась около колес и ног лошади, оставляя свои семена на мокрых спицах и ступицах. (18:255)

At the river, Koznyshev meditates on the beauty of nature but catches no fish, which, once again, reasserts his alienation from the natural world. In other words, Koznyshev's interest in

philosophy, and particularly in its idealist branch, results in his ignorance of the value of the material world, which he perceives only as an aesthetic category and a prompt for philosophical meditation rather than as the source of life.

Koznyshev's philosophical idealism is also reflected in his personal relations. Koznyshev remains faithful to the memory of a woman, Marie, to whom he apparently had been married, and who has since died. In other words, Koznyshev invests his emotions in the immaterial ghost of the woman he loved. Commenting on his half-brother, Levin points out that Koznyshev is unlikely to marry Varen'ka because he lives only an "ideal" or "spiritual" life and cannot reconcile it with "mundane reality," and thus with Varen'ka as a real woman: "он так привык жить одною духовною жизнью, что не может примириться с действительностью" (19:131). Koznyshev's "idealism" is a negative rather than positive trait. Despite his intellectualism, Tolstoi suggests that Koznyshev's personality is deficient ("недостаток"); he lacks, as Levin says, the "force of life" ("сила жизни"), the desire to persistently strive for a chosen goal: "недостаток чего-то ... недостаток силы жизни, того, что называют сердцем, того стремления, которое заставляет человека из всех бесчисленных представляющихся путей жизни выбрать один и желать этого одного" (18:253). Tolstoi associates Koznyshev's lack of "life force" with his lack of "heart," which, in the context of haptic theory, could result not only in his dispassionate personality and loyalty to a deceased lover, but also in his insufficient corporeality. Koznyshev's alienation from the material / corporeal layer of life undermines his ability to establish unity with Varen'ka.

Unlike Koznyshev, Varen'ka is mundane: she volunteers at a German spa, rendering practical help to the patients (for instance, bringing them glasses of water or blankets, walking with a blind woman or a child). Her practical help for other people seems to immerse her in the

very texture of the material world. However, her practicality conceals her emotional alienation in intimate relations. Despite her selfless service and ability to connect with a vast body of patients at the spa (for example, she effortlessly calms Nikolai Levin when he makes a public scene), she does not connect with any of them on a personal level. Just like Koznyshev, her heart has been broken: she was in love with a man who, obeying his mother's request, married another woman. In other words, Varen'ka does not seek new love, but dwells on her lost one as Koznyshev does.

Varen'ka's nickname "Angel" reflects not only the rightfully-earned title for her kindness, but also her tranquil—verging on cold and dispassionate—personality. In fact, Tolstoi describes Varen'ka as "cold" on a number of occasions. For instance, when she comes across a song that she used to sing for her beloved, she quickly overcomes her emotional agitation and sings in a typically "calm" and "cold" manner ("И она спела это так же спокойно, холодно и хорошо, как и прежде" 18:233). Despite her kindness, Varen'ka is emotionally alienated and cold.

Varen'ka's coldness is also indirectly suggested in her lack of sensuality. As Kitty comments, Varen'ka lacks the life force, or the "*fire of life*" ("*огонь жизни*"; emphasis added), associated with the sense of one's own attractiveness. While Kitty is aware of and delights in her own attractiveness, as at the ball at the beginning of the novel, Varen'ka lacks this sense: "... она не могла быть привлекательною для мужчин еще и потому, что ей не доставало того, чего слишком много было в Кити — сдержанного огня жизни и сознания своей привлекательности" (18:233). Kitty concludes that Varen'ka's lack of the inner "fire of life" renders her dispassionate and thus unattractive to men.

Despite Varen'ka's practicality, Kitty describes Varen'ka to Levin as "spiritual" and alienated from mundane "reality," implying her selfless and dispassionate personality: "— Да,

но в ней [Вареньке] нет этой действительности, как во мне [Кити] [...]. Она вся духовная...” (19:132). Her “spirituality” is reflected in her physique: she has a dry body and a disproportionally big head (“слишком большая сухость тела и несоразмерная голова, по среднему росту” 18:227). In the context of Plato’s mind/body division, Varen’ka’s “disproportionally big head” compared to her “too dry” body (producing the impression of a body lacking in meat/muscle/flesh, as least in this introductory portrayal) could suggest that the “mind/spirit” is dominant. Kitty and Varen’ka’s hands come into contact during their handshake, which serves to contrast Varen’ka’s calm, motionless, and impassive handshake with Kitty’s strong, energetic and passionate one. While Kitty’s handshake suggests her strong muscles, Varen’ka’s hand lacks muscular strength: “Кити покраснела от радости и долго молча жала руку своего нового друга, которая не отвечала на её пожатие, но неподвижно лежала в её руке” (18:230).

For all of Varen’ka selfless service to others, her meek hand and dry body suggest her insufficient corporeality, her deficiency. Varen’ka’s tranquility is not so much an expression of her self-asserted composure as it is of her resignation—her lack of any wish or desire, which manifestly differentiates her from Kitty: “с грустным разочарованием, ничего не желавшая, ничего не жалеющая” (18:236). Varen’ka insists that she is happy, but asserts this happiness using a double negative structure (“I am not unhappy”) before a positive statement (“I am very happy”): “я не несчастна; напротив, я очень счастлива” (18:234). The double negative produces the impression that Varen’ka is trying to *convince* herself that she is happy. Tolstoi suggests that Varen’ka’s impassive personality is not entirely inborn. As Kitty notices when Varen’ka shares the story of her past love, a “little flame” (“огонек”) seems to kindle up in her, which, Kitty guesses, used to illuminate her whole being: “— Я любила его, и он любил меня;

но его мать не хотела, и он женился на другой. Он теперь живет недалеко от нас, и я иногда вижу его. Вы не думали, что у меня тоже был роман? — сказала она, и в красивом лице ее чуть брезжил тот огонек, который, Кити чувствовала, когда-то освещал ее всю” (18:233). Since Tolstoi associates even Levin and Kitty’s non-carnal love with their manifest physicality, Varen’ka’s incorporeality—her dry body, meek hand, and “little” flame (contrasted with Kitty’s overabundant “fire of life”)—reflects her resignation from desiring a personal, intimate connection with another, and therefore a retreat from love.

Nonetheless, as was discussed in the chapter on Kitty and Levin, Tolstoi suggests that Kitty and Varen’ka’s friendship changes not only Kitty but also Varen’ka. When Kitty has a heated argument with Varen’ka shortly before her departure, manifesting her typically passionate nature and rejecting Varen’ka’s tranquil but dispassionate lifestyle, she grabs Varen’ka’s umbrella and opens and closes it frantically, breaking a spring:

— Ах, как глупо, гадко! Не было мне никакой нужды... Всё притворство! — говорила она, открывая и закрывая зонтик. [...] Варенька в шляпе и с зонтиком в руках сидела у стола, рассматривая пружину, которую сломала Кити. (18:248–49)

Varen’ka umbrella, a mechanism that can only function if it is finely constructed, seems to suggest Varen’ka’s measured lifestyle. The damaged spring, broken by Kitty, suggests that Varen’ka, too, undergoes a transformation under Kitty’s influence. Perhaps it is therefore not accidental that it is Kitty who acquaints Varen’ka with the man whom she begins to fancy for the first time after her unhappy past.

However, since both Koznyshev and Varen’ka are alienated from life’s corporeal layer, they fail to form a union—to become “one flesh” through the sacrament of marriage. Despite their mutual sympathy and consideration of one another as a perfect match, both of them have doubts about marriage. In spite of their mutual attraction, they are not passionate enough about

one another. Koznyshev views Varen'ka as the perfect wife but still feels conflicted about betraying the memory of his late beloved: “«Но, кроме этого, сколько бы я ни искал, я ничего не найду, что бы сказать против моего чувства. Если бы я выбирал одним разумом, я ничего не мог бы найти лучше»” (19:136). Varen'ka, too, is conflicted about her feelings for Koznyshev. She lists the rational, social advantages of their marriage, but she cannot decide whether she loves him or not, concluding that she is “almost certainly” in love with him. Consistent with her own doubts, she is equally afraid of whether he will or will not propose: “Быть женой такого человека, как Кознышев, после своего положения у госпожи Шталь представлялось ей верхом счастья. Кроме того, она почти была уверена, что она влюблена в него” (19:137).

The degree of the pair's alienation from the corporeal and therefore from one another becomes explicit during their “declaration of love,” which, in fact, never takes place. Although Koznyshev eventually decides to propose to Varen'ka, he fails to *physically pronounce* his proposal out loud, which is consistent with his alienation from the corporeal. Tolstoi graphically symbolizes the division between Koznyshev's mind and body, dividing Koznyshev's “proposal” with a chapter break. At the end of Part 6 Chapter IV, Koznyshev sees Varen'ka picking mushrooms and resolutely walks towards her in order to propose. Part 6 Chapter V begins with what the reader understands to be Koznyshev's proposal speech. By the end of the speech, however, the reader realizes that Koznyshev has pronounced the speech *only in his mind*, while remaining ten steps away from Varen'ka:

Он почувствовал, что решился. Варенька, только что присевшая, чтобы поднять гриб, гибким движением поднялась и оглянулась. Бросив сигару, Сергей Иванович решительными шагами направился к ней.

[End of Part 6. Chapter IV.]

[Beginning of Part 6. Chapter V.] «Варвара Андреевна, когда я был еще очень молод, я составил себе идеал женщины, которую я люблю и которую я буду

счастлив назвать своею женой. Я прожил длинную жизнь и теперь в первый раз встретил в вас то, чего искал. ».
Сергей Иванович говорил себе это в то время, как он был уже в десяти шагах от Вареньки. (19:135–36)

Koznyshev's alienation from the corporeal layer of life, from "mundane" reality ("действительность"), undermines his ability to *speak*—to act on a corporeal and not only intellectual level. Koznyshev offers his "hand" to Varen'ka ("Я люблю вас и предлагаю вам руку") only in his imagination, not in actual life.

Like Koznyshev, Varen'ka proves helpless in the face of romance—the chance to establish an intimate personal bond. Tolstoi does not refer to Varen'ka's haptic experiences in this scene as he does in Koznyshev's case. However, Varen'ka's lack of corporeal awareness may be seen in her failure to recognize and use her attractiveness to encourage Koznyshev. Instead of facilitating Koznyshev's confession, Varen'ka, to the contrary, distracts him as if by accident, slipping into a discussion about mushrooms and undermining Koznyshev's troubled efforts to propose:

Вареньке лучше было молчать. После молчания можно было легче сказать то, что они хотели сказать, чем после слов о грибах; но против своей воли, как будто нечаянно, Варенька сказала:

— Так вы ничего не нашли? Впрочем, в середине леса всегда меньше. [...]

Он повторял себе и слова, которыми он хотел выразить свое предложение; но вместо этих слов, по какому-то неожиданно пришедшему ему соображению, он вдруг спросил:

— Какая же разница между белым и березовым? (19:137–38)

Koznyshev and Varen'ka's "love confession" ends in their separation, which Tolstoi shows through their movements. When Koznyshev is about to confess to Varen'ka, they walk closely to one another and away from the crowd of children, forging alone into the woods. When Koznyshev fails to propose, they return to the estate together, but do not touch. The gap between their bodies reasserts their alienation. Despite their mutual sympathy, both of them decide

against the marriage rationally rather than emotionally. Their lack of corporeality, which results, Tolstoi seems to suggest, in their insufficient attraction, weakens their wish to be wed and thus undermines their evolving bond. Their physical proximity never results in physical contact, just as their mutual sympathy never concludes in unity.

While Koznyshev fails to offer his “hand” to Varen’ka in marriage (figuratively speaking), Varen’ka’s previously discussed “impassive” hand seems too meek to reach out to Koznyshev, too. Neither of them is “corporeal” enough to facilitate their unity. Kitty summarizes Koznyshev and Varen’ka’s failed connection with what seems to be an idiomatic expression, which is also imbued with haptic meaning:

Кити не нужно было спрашивать Вареньку; она по спокойным и несколько пристыженным выражениям обоих лиц поняла, что планы ее не сбылись.
— Ну, что? — спросил ее муж, когда они опять возвращались домой.
— *Не берет*, — сказала Кити [...].
— Как не берет?
— Вот так, — сказала она, взяв руку мужа, поднося ее ко рту и дотрогиваясь до нее нераскрытыми губами. — Как у архиерея руку целуют.
— У кого же не берет? — сказал он смеясь.
— У обоих. [...] (19:138–39; emphasis added)

On the one hand, Kitty’s expression “не берет” may derive from an idiom, perhaps something like “брать за душу/touch somebody’s heart,” thus suggesting Koznyshev and Varen’ka’s lack of passion for one another. On the other hand, if read literally, the expression has a particularly haptic connotation and refers to implied *hands*: “[it] does not take/grab.” The latter, then, may refer to Koznyshev and Varen’ka’s non-meeting hands, the gap between them embodying their failed unity. Their alienation from the corporeal layer of life reflects their equal reluctance to desire and thus “grab” the desired, which hampers their chance for unity.

Conclusion

Drawing on haptic theory, this dissertation has demonstrated the relationship between Tolstoi's views on morality and his representation of sensory, and particularly haptic, experiences in *Anna Karenina*, arguing that the characters' moral strengths and weaknesses affect (by facilitating or frustrating) their physical contact with one another and the world. In keeping with his anxiety over human sexuality, Tolstoi depicts sexuality as a force that, if indulged, severs human relations, dividing people on both emotional and corporeal levels. Stiva's sensuality, reflected in his sensory indulgence in mundane phenomena, interferes with his touch with his wife. His ambiguous morality and promiscuity lead to Dolly's emotional alienation and introduce a gap between their hands. In keeping with Merleau-Ponty's conception of touch as an instant of "entwinement" between two individual bodies who form a single "intercorporeal" whole, Stiva and Dolly's interrupted touch reveals that Stiva's sensuality breaches rather than facilitates this "entwinement." Tolstoi's representation of Dolly's haptic experience (the pain in her nipples from breastfeeding) suggests that her identity is that of a mother, rather than of a sexual being, and reveals that Dolly is an embodiment of one of Tolstoi's moral ideals in the novel (along with Levin and Kitty). The fact that Dolly's haptic experiences are few suggests that she has found a balance between body and soul, something that other characters still seek and to which their ample haptic (and sensory) experiences seem to testify.

While Anna manages to re-connect Stiva's family members through *her* touch at the beginning of the novel, her evolving passion for Vronskii jeopardizes her touch with not only her husband and her children, but also with Vronskii himself. Anna's eyes become "impenetrable" to Karenin's gaze, indicating that her sexual desire erects a barrier between her and her husband. Anna's "impenetrable shield of lies" seems to cover not only her eyes but also her skin, delaying the sensation of Karenin's touch and thus enabling her to conceal her physical aversion to him. The "impenetrable" visual and haptic "wall" between Anna and Karenin indicates that Anna's passion divides them into two individual entities, rendering her unwilling to reciprocate Karenin's gaze and touch and thus preventing them from merging into an "intercorporeal" whole. Although Anna never stops loving her son by Karenin, she chooses her passion for Vronskii over her motherly love. The way in which Anna uses Vronskii's picture to unstick her son's and the way in which her attention seamlessly shifts from her son to Vronskii, as she unsticks the picture, reflect the shift in Anna's feelings. Her passion for Vronskii begins to dominate her love for her son, just like the picture of Vronskii dominates her attention in the scene. Anna is also alienated from her daughter by Vronskii: she touches her child as if out of duty, feeling no genuinely emotional attachment to her. Tolstoi suggests that Anna's passion for Vronskii diminishes her motherly love for their daughter. While Anna and Vronskii consummate their passion on a physical level, they fail to form a stable, emotionally close unity. Unlike Levin and Kitty, Anna and Vronskii overcome their disagreements only temporarily. They prove unable to maintain a mutually respectful relationship and care for one another, rather than acting on their individual interests regardless of the other party's feelings. Tolstoi shows that the characters' carnal attraction, in place of genuine affection and respect for one another's personality and needs, cannot serve as a foundation for their emotional bond, resulting not only

in their emotional but also corporeal (haptic) estrangement. Their mutual reproaches cause tension in their relationship and consistently interrupt their physical contact, revealing that their carnal attraction is not a sufficient means to bind them into an “intercorporeal” whole. In addition, the fragmentation of Anna’s increasingly distorted haptic experiences and other sensations reveals that her sensuality has estranged her not only from other people but also from external reality in general.

The haptic experiences of Karenin, Vronskii, Koznyshev, and Varen’ka suggest that sexuality is not the only cause of alienation between people. Karenin’s fear of empathy causes him bodily discomfort: he cracks his knuckles as if relieving the discomfort of a dislocated joint every time he has to deal with a matter requiring his emotional involvement—either at work or in his relationship with Anna. His irritation with her and his desire to take revenge for the pain caused by her unfaithfulness complements this emotional distress with a physical one: the irritation makes his body sore while riding in a carriage, causing him to move and stretch to ameliorate the ache. He accidentally displaces a warm rug and exposes his bony, sensitive legs to the winter cold. The fact that Karenin’s physical suffering derives from his reluctance to forgive indicates that his lack of empathy hurts him as much as it hurts Anna. Karenin’s bodily discomfort conveys Tolstoi’s notion that Karenin’s restrained sensitivity, associated with religious hypocrisy, is his moral flaw. In addition to Anna’s passion for Vronskii, Karenin’s emotional restraint erects the second “impenetrable” barrier between them, rendering him first unable and later unwilling to reach out to Anna. Their haptic interaction reflects Karenin’s alienation from Anna: his restrained but gentle touch before Anna’s romance transforms into a violent grab so strong that it presses Anna’s bracelet into her skin, causing her pain. Karenin’s physical contact with Anna during her postpartum fever is the sole exception to his emotional

restraint, when he succumbs to empathy. The transformation in Karenin's emotional state is reflected in his touch: when he touches Anna's burning body, he senses the heat of Anna's skin. Karenin's physical sensitivity to Anna's body reflects his emotional compassion for her suffering.

Vronskii's haptic experiences reveal his self-absorption and ambition as moral flaws. Vronskii's acute awareness of his bodily sensations and especially his self-touch (on his leg, still hurting after the race accident, and on his hand, on the spot where Anna had touched it) reflect his self-absorption. His self-absorption leads him to ignore the harm that his selfish pursuits have caused both Kitty and Anna, and thus associates bodily awareness with amorality. Vronskii's failure to synchronize his movements with his horse during the race suggests that his ambition undermines his kinesthetic perception. Vronskii urges Frou-Frou to run unnecessarily fast, wishing her not only to win the race but also to come in a long first. When Frou-Frou manages to gallop faster, Vronskii fails to keep up with her speed and movements, landing on her back earlier than the movement requires, breaking her back, and losing the race. Vronskii's ambition not only results in failure, revealing his aims to be vain, but also forefronts his insensitivity to the horse's injury. Realizing that he has lost the race, Vronskii cruelly kicks his horse in the stomach with his boot. Although he seems to feel some compassion for her when he comes to his senses, he quickly forgets about both his failure and Frou-Frou's death (a result of the accident). He joyfully delights in the pain of his leg, hurt by the fall, as early as the next day—having the recollection of his fall, but no guilt for Frou-Frou's death. The absence of his haptic memory of the event reveals his absent moral sense in the early stages of his relationship with Anna. Although Vronskii undergoes an emotional and moral transformation, learning to empathize with Anna, his unwillingness to give up the active social life that is now inaccessible to her aggravates

her jealousy and resentment. Vronskii's acting on his own interests, regardless of the pain which his actions cause Anna, suggests that his moral sense remains limited although it begins to evolve. Vronskii and Anna's resentment alienates them from one another on both emotional and haptic levels, reflected in instances of their interrupted touch.

Koznyshev and Varen'ka's haptic experiences testify to the dominance of their intellectual rather than sensual makeup, which Tolstoi reveals through their alienation from life's corporality: Koznyshev avoids proper, manual engagement with the world of nature, and Varen'ka, for all of her work at the spa, has a meek, unmuscular hand that suggests a lack of sensuality. A haptic analysis suggests that Koznyshev's and Varen'ka's alienation from the corporeal reflects their lack of passion. They doubt their wish to marry, despite their mutual sympathy, which undermines their communication and prevents them from revealing their feelings. Koznyshev only pronounces his confession of love in his mind—without actually proposing to Varen'ka. Guessing that Koznyshev has come to see her in order to propose, Varen'ka becomes anxious and distracts Koznyshev with a mundane question about mushrooms instead of any encouragement. Kitty's haptic description of their relationship epitomizes Koznyshev and Varen'ka's unsuccessful romance: because of their alienation from the corporeal, they are unable to “grab” one another's hands. Although Koznyshev's and Varen'ka's lack of sensuality is not a moral flaw (both of them are portrayed as good, and Varen'ka even as virtuous), their rational mindset does represent a flaw. It prevents them from being immersed in the natural, physical flux of life, forming a marital union, and procreating. Since their profession of love never takes place, their hands never touch, as one would expect if they had revealed their feelings. (For instance, Kitty puts her hands on Levin's shoulders when Levin visits the Shcherbatskiis the morning after his their profession of love for one another.) In keeping with

Merleau-Ponty, the absence of Koznyshev and Varen'ka's intimate touch suggests that, despite their mutual sympathy, their rationality and lack of sensuality prevent them from merging into a single "intercorporeal" whole, so they remain separate entities.

Unlike Koznyshev and Varen'ka, Levin and Kitty are not devoid of sensuality, but their sensuality does not dominate their personalities as it does for Stiva and Anna. Levin and Kitty's sensuality complements their emotional and moral kinship, resulting in their forming an "intercorporeal" union. Tolstoi endows both characters with long-range vision, which, in the context of Platonic philosophy, suggests their spiritual rather than carnal predispositions. He also endows them with kinesthetic (muscular strength and bodily dexterity) rather than cutaneous and tactile sensations, which emphasize their physical but not sensual engagement with the world. In keeping with Tolstoi's suspicion of sexuality, because Levin and Kitty's tactile interaction is limited, they eventually transcend the boundaries of their individual bodies to become "one flesh," or an "intercorporeal" whole through the sacrament of marriage. Karenin's anger, Vronskii's self-absorption, and Anna's jealousy render them insensitive and propel their hostility. Levin and Kitty's love, on the contrary, renders them mutually compassionate. Their compassion imbues them with an ability to sense one another's pain, as the parties of the "intercorporeal" whole should do, and encourages them to settle their temporary disagreements.

The Haptic in Tolstoi's other fictional writings

Although haptic elements are particularly prominent in *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoi's other fictional works also lend themselves to haptic analysis. Since Tolstoi's preoccupation with sexuality is consistent throughout his literary career, a haptic reading of his fiction written before and after *Anna Karenina* may reveal a correspondence between Tolstoi's level of anxiety about sexuality and his representation of a person's sensory contact—particularly touch—with others

and the world. For instance, Tolstoi's depiction of mother-son tactile interactions in the novel *Childhood* anticipates *Anna Karenina*, but emphasizes Tolstoi's growing suspicion of human sexuality. In both novels, a mother-child touch proves to be an expression of their profound physical and emotional bond. However, *Childhood* portrays the touch between mother and child as healing, though *Anna Karenina* represents it as compromised by a mother's sensuality. When Nikolai Irten'ev, *Childhood*'s protagonist and narrator, recalls his late mother's touch, he seems to overcome the gap between present and past, recapturing not only the tactile sensation but also the love that was communicated. Describing Nikolai's recollection, Tolstoi shifts the grammatical tense from past to present, narrating little Nikolen'ka and his mother's touches entirely in the present tense:

...она *присела* [past tense] на кресло, на котором я сплю, своей чудесной нежной ручкой *провела* [past tense] по моим волосам, и над ухом моим *звучит* [present tense: here and further on to the end of the scene] милый знакомый голос:

— Вставай, моя душечка: пора идти спать.

Ничьи равнодушные взоры не стесняют ее: она не боится излить на меня всю свою нежность и любовь. Я не шевелюсь, но еще крепче целую ее руку.

— Вставай же, мой ангел.

Она другой рукой берет меня за шею, и пальчики ее быстро шевелятся и щекотят меня. В комнате тихо, полутемно: нервы мои возбуждены щекоткой и пробуждением; мамаша сидит подле самого меня; она трогает меня; я слышу ее запах и голос. Все это заставляет меня вскочить, обвить руками ее шею, прижать голову к ее груди и, задыхаясь, сказать:

— Ах, милая, милая мамаша, как я тебя люблю!

Она улыбается своей грустной, очаровательной улыбкой, берет обеими руками мою голову, целует меня в лоб и кладет к себе на колени. (emphasis added; 1:43–44)

Although Tolstoi often shifts tenses throughout the novel, the temporal shift in the depiction of Nikolen'ka and his mother's physical contact reflects the immediacy, the contemporaneity of his experience. The chapter which describes Nikolai and his mother's touch is called "Childhood," reinforcing the significance of the narrator's mother and his youthful innocence. Nikolai's recollection of his mother's touch reflects his longing not only for her love but also for his past

purity. Just as Nikolai's recollection of his mother's caress seems to recapture her love, as if collapsing the temporal gap between then and now, the recollection of his youthful innocence proves healing, cleansing and "exalting [to] his soul": "Воспоминания эти освежают, возвышают мою душу" (1:43).

Unlike those of the *Childhood* narrator, Anna's son Serëzha's recollections of his mother after her tragic death do not prove healing. While Nikolen'ka's memories of his mother allow him to regain his sense of childlike belonging, Serëzha's recollections of his mother hurt him and alienate him. Serëzha falls gravely ill after his mother's surprise visit on his birthday, and everything that reminds him of her upsets him even after he recovers. When his uncle Stiva visits and wants to speak to him, he recognizes his mother's features in his uncle and feels confused and upset. When Stiva touches his hand, Serëzha pulls away, and then, when Stiva releases his hand, he rushes out of the room:

Дядя подозвал мальчика и взял его за руку.
— Ну что ж, как дела? — сказал он, желая разговориться и не зная, что сказать.
Мальчик, краснея и не отвечая, осторожно потягивал свою руку из руки дяди.
Как только Степан Аркадьич выпустил его руку, он, как птица, выпущенная на волю, вопросительно взглянув на отца, быстрым шагом вышел из комнаты. [...]
Увидать дядю, похожего на мать, ему было неприятно, потому что это вызвало в нем те самые воспоминания, которые он считал стыдными. [...] И чтобы не осуждать того отца, с которым он жил и от которого зависел и, главное, не предаваться чувствительности, которую он считал столь унижительной, Сережа старался не смотреть на этого дядю, приехавшего нарушать его спокойствие, и не думать про то, что он напоминал. (19:305)

When a tutor notices that Serëzha is upset and wants to help, Serëzha asks to be left alone, and he says it with such intense emotion that it seems as if he addresses not only the tutor but also the entire world: "— Оставьте меня! Помню, не помню... Какое ему дело? Зачем мне помнить? Оставьте меня в покое! — обратился он уже не к гувернеру, а ко всему свету" (19:306). Anna's romance with Vronskii introduces a gap of emotional alienation between Serëzha and his

uncle as well as with other people, revealing how Anna's carnality continues to fragment her family, alienating its members, even after her death.

It is true that the difference between the *Childhood* narrator's and Serëzha's emotional responses to their mothers' deaths can be explained psychologically. Unlike the narrator of the other story, Serëzha is still a child, deeply hurt by the recent loss of his mother. However, one may also suggest that, by depicting Serëzha's emotional and physical estrangement, Tolstoi emphasizes the lasting disruption of Anna's sexuality, thus imbuing Serëzha's estrangement with moral meaning. While Nikolai's recollection of his mother's touch in *Childhood* brings back his lost youthful innocence, closing the gap between past innocence and present corruption (as he views adulthood), Serëzha's recollections of his mother open up an emotional and haptic gap in his relationships with other people.

Although sexuality is not Tolstoi's central preoccupation in *Childhood*, as it is in *Anna Karenina*, his angst about the corruptibility of human flesh already lurks in the novel—revealed in his depiction of the holy fool Grisha's treatment of his body. Peeking at Grisha praying in his room, Nikolen'ka notices that Grisha wears heavy chains. Grisha wears the chains in order to mortify his bodily desires, which may endanger his spiritual aspirations. It is true that Tolstoi portrays Nikolen'ka's naïve sensuality as non-disruptive, and the nanny Natalia Savishna's inherent morality as an ideal, contrasting rather than comparing them to Grisha's bodily self-mortification. However, Grisha's ascetic practice anticipates Tolstoi's later writings—for instance, his story "Father Sergius," wherein he represents self-mortification as a means of taming carnal desires, and thus hints at Tolstoi's nascent anxiety about human physicality as early as *Childhood*.

In *War and Peace*, the representation of the haptic is less prominent than in *Anna Karenina*, but is nonetheless present. For instance, Natasha Rostova's impulsive kinesthetic movements—when the young adolescent Natasha “accidentally” runs into a living room at the beginning of the novel, or when she, already a mother of three, nearly breaks into a run with impatience to greet her husband at the end of the novel—reflects her ingenuous emotional spontaneity, her typical “impulses” (“порывы”). Natasha's kinesthetic spontaneity indicates her child-like purity, which she preserves even as she matures.

Tolstoi also uses Natasha's body to show her empathetic nature as she helps her distraught friend Sonia overcome her alienation. When Natasha finds Sonia crying, she herself breaks into tears out of compassion:

... Соня ... лежала ничком ... и, закрыв лицо пальчиками, навзрыд плакала, подрагивая своими оголенными плечиками. Лицо Наташи, оживленное, целый день именинное, вдруг изменилось: глаза ее остановились, потом содрогнулась ее широкая шея, углы губ опустились.

— Соня! что ты?... Что, что с тобой? У-у-у!..

И Наташа, распустив свой большой рот и сделавшись совершенно дурною, заревела, как ребенок, не зная причины и только оттого, что Соня плакала. (9:79–80)

Tolstoy depicts the transformation of Natasha's facial expression in the instant that she perceives Sonia crying: her face changes suddenly, her eyes freeze, her wide neck shudders, the corners of her lips sink, her large mouth gapes. The transformation of Natasha's face demonstrates how immediately she reciprocates her friend's grief, even before she knows its cause. The way in which Sonia's emotion initiates Natasha's crying produces the impression that they have become one body, suggesting the instance of their “intercorporeal” unity.

Tolstoi's depiction of Sonia's and Natasha's bodies in the scene corroborates their “intercorporeal” entwinement. Describing Sonia, he depicts her body up to her neck (she is lying on her chest, shoulders shuddering as she sobs), but her face is concealed from the reader's view

(she hides it in her hands): “Соня ... лежала ничком ... закрыв лицо пальчиками, навзрыд плакала, подрагивая своими оголенными плечиками” (9:79). Tolstoi then shifts focus and describes Natasha’s reaction to seeing her friend cry, leaving only her *face* visible to the reader and omitting her body: “Лицо...Наташи ... вдруг изменилось: глаза ее остановились, потом содрогнулась ее широкая шея, углы губ опустились [...] распустив свой большой рот ... заревела, как ребенок” (9:80). While Tolstoi emphasizes Natasha’s “wide” neck—uncharacteristic of a slender, twelve-year-old girl—he uses a diminutive in the depiction of Sonia’s neck a few pages later, suggesting that her neck is thin (“шейк[а] с выступавшими костями груди” (9:83). Sonia is trying but cannot express her grief by either crying or talking—that is, by using her neck as a passageway for her oppressive emotion. The composition of the scene suggests that Natasha’s face and “wide” neck visually substitute for Sonia’s face and thin neck, demonstrating that while Sonia is unable to let out her grief, Natasha’s “wide” neck is able to release not only her own but also her friend’s emotions. When Natasha bursts into tears at the sight of Sonia sobbing, she seems to *participate* in her emotion to the extent that she gives an *outlet* to Sonia’s suffering, so Sonia’s emotional state begins to improve: she rises slightly and starts to share her grief with Natasha (“Наташа плакала, присев на синей перине и обнимая друга. Собравшись с силами, Соня приподнялась, начала утирать слезы и рассказывать” 9:80). The episode ends with Sonia and Natasha rejoining other children and singing a song all together, thus confirming that Natasha’s compassion has helped to relieve Sonia of her grief and to overcome her alienation.

Tolstoi’s attention to Natasha’s and Sonia’s necks in this scene suggests another important aspect of Tolstoi’s representation of the body in *War and Peace*, though it concerns *oral-aural* perception rather than haptic. According to Merleau-Ponty, hearing and vociferation

are two aspects of a single sound-related sense, whose function is to facilitate a person's intertwinement with the world as touch does. In keeping with Merleau-Ponty, Tolstoi shows the way in which Natasha overcomes her alienation after Anatol' Kuragin nearly seduces her through singing, when she regains her ability to produce sound (vociferation). Stricken by grief, Natasha finds herself unable to sing. Every time she tries, she feels that the tears of shame and humiliation will suffocate her. Only after she fasts does she regain her good spirits, along with her ability to sing. Tolstoi portrays Natasha's recovery through her relationship with sound. He shows how, during the service, her inner voice responds to the words of the prayer that she hears. Natasha's hearing the prayer (and responding to it with her inner voice) is the first, receptive aspect of the auditory-oratory sense, and it leads to her vociferation when she is able to sing again. Natasha's lost and regained ability to sing reflects her alienation and reconnection with the world. Sound-related actions, however diverse and seemingly unrelated (wailing, listening to a prayer, inability and ability to sing), may be considered another means (in addition to touch) which Tolstoi uses to show human interconnectedness and alienation in *War and Peace*.

Since Tolstoi's attitude towards human physicality becomes more ascetic in the 1880s and 90s, his representation of the senses in the later story "Father Sergius" suggests that he begins to view the senses (vision, touch, hearing, and smell, since Tolstoi typically omits taste) as equally disruptive. Robert Jackson, who writes about the story in his article "Father Sergius and the Paradox of the Fortunate Fall," mentions sensory elements as something that creates a "powerful sense of the erotic": "what Sergius and Makovkina are feeling and experiencing ... is conveyed through smells, sounds, smiles, laughter, groans, prayers, and crushing silences" (469–470). In contrast to his earlier writings, Tolstoi portrays human community in "Father Sergius" as something that endangers Kasatskii's spiritual quest. Thus, it is perhaps not accidental that the

senses, including hearing and touch, which Tolstoi portrays as facilitators of human community in his earlier works, trouble the story's protagonist the most. Sound has the capacity to penetrate physical boundaries (which, for instance, vision cannot), making it a dangerous means of seduction. Kasatskii's night guest Makovkina deliberately produces loud sounds as she walks barefoot on the cell floor and takes off her clothes to evoke seductive images in Kasatskii's imagination—while he hides in an adjacent room, trying to avoid the temptation. He manages to subdue his desire for Makovkina through, as Jackson comments, symbolic “self-emasculation” (Jackson 471)—cutting off a finger and thus, one can say, preventing himself from touching Makovkina. While he succeeds in resisting Makovkina's seduction, he fails to resist the temptation of the half-witted Maria. Maria seduces Kasatskii more straightforwardly—not through suggestive sounds but directly, through touch, which Tolstoi portrays as a more powerful means. When Maria takes Kasatskii's hand and draws it to her chest, having him touch her body, he finds himself overcome with desire.

Other instances of Kasatskii's interactions with people or nature show how images, sounds, and smells stir up his feelings and jeopardize his spiritual resolve. For instance, during a service, he sees his parishioners' improper behavior, hears their frivolous conversations, smells the scents of cigars and wine—all of which incite his judgment and distract him, so he tries to redirect his vision and hearing towards spiritual scenes (icons, lit candles, and prayers):

Борьба состояла в том, что его раздражали посетители, господа, особенно дамы. Он старался не видеть их, не замечать всего того, что делалось: не видеть того, как солдат провожал их, расталкивая народ, как дамы показывали друг другу монахов - часто его даже и известного красавца монаха. Он старался, выдвинув как бы шторы своему вниманию, не видеть ничего, кроме блеска свечей у иконостаса, иконы и служащих; не слышать ничего, кроме петых и произносимых слов молитв, и не испытывать никакого другого чувства, кроме того самозабвения в сознании исполнения должного, которое он испытывал всегда, слушая и повторяя вперед столько раз слышанные молитвы. [...]

Все лицо игумна, среди седин красное и улыбающееся, как бы одобряющее то, что говорил генерал, выхоленное лицо генерала с самодовольной улыбкой, запах вина изо рта генерала и сигар от его бакенбард - все это взорвало отца Сергия. (31:14–16)

Since Tolstoi begins to see the natural world and its reproductive forces (of which human sexuality is a part) as an obstacle to a person's spiritual development, he portrays not only images of corruption (as in the scene above) but also images representing the beauty of nature as distracting. While young Tolstoi views nature as a part of the spiritual realm, Tolstoi of the 1880s portrays it as a force that *conflicts* with the spiritual. In particular, Tolstoi associates Kasatskii's susceptibility to the impressions of nature with his loss of faith. The beauty of nature (especially thriving in the spring) appeals to Kasatskii's visual, auditory, and tactile perceptions: he sees the colors of blossoming trees and the radiant sunset, he hears the singing of birds and peasants, and the noises of bugs:

Черемуховые кусты за вязом были в полном цвету и еще не осыпались. Соловьи, один совсем близко и другие два или три внизу в кустах у реки, щелкали и заливались. С реки слышалось далеко пенье возвращавшихся, верно с работы, рабочих; солнце зашло за лес и брызгало разбившимися лучами сквозь зелень. Вся сторона эта была светло-зеленая, другая, с вязом, была темная. Жуки летали, хлопались и падали. (31:35)

Kasatskii is irritated because he feels that these impressions distract him from reading a psalm renouncing the world, seeming to seduce him in a similar way as Makovkina did. Tolstoi suggests that, without steadfast faith, Kasatskii cannot find the spiritual strength to renounce the world, and the world of nature keeps stealing up to him when he is trying to renounce it. When the natural world directly touches him (Kasatskii feels a bug crawling on his skin), he suddenly questions the existence of God:

И он сложил руки и стал молиться. Соловьи заливались. Жук налетел на него и пополз по затылку. Он сбросил его. "Да есть ли Он?... Что, как я стучусь у запертого снаружи дома... Замок на двери, и я мог бы видеть его. Замок этот – соловьи, жуки, природа." (31:35)

His encounter with a childhood friend, the humble Pashen'ka, leads to Kasatskii's inner transformation and renders him, one can say, insusceptible to physical contact with the external world: it can no longer stir up his feelings, be a cause of irritation or pleasure. Kasatskii's transformation is reflected in his tactile interaction with Pashen'ka. When he comes to see her, to ask her to teach him how to live a proper spiritual life, he does not take her hand:

— ...Только не Сергей, не отец Сергей, а великий грешник Степан Касатский, погибший, великий грешник. Прими, помоги мне.
— Да не может быть, да как же вы это так смирились? Да пойдемте же.
Она протянула руку; но он не взял ее и пошел за нею. (31: 39–40)

He does not pull away his hand from Pashen'ka's once he humbles himself, admitting and confessing his corruption:

— ... Пашенька! я не святой человек, даже не простой, рядовой человек: я грешник, грязный, гадкий, заблудший, гордый грешник, хуже, не знаю, всех ли, но хуже самых худых людей.
Пашенька смотрела сначала выпучив глаза; она верила. Потом, когда она вполне поверила, она тронула рукой его руку и, жалостно улыбаясь, сказала:
— Стива, может быть, ты преувеличиваешь?
— Нет, Пашенька. Я блудник, я убийца, я богохульник и обманщик. (31:41)

Pashen'ka's two touches: one that he rejects and the other that he accepts, reflect Kasatskii's spiritual transformation: he rejects the past identity of a venerated monk and accepts a new identity of humility, recognizing his sinful, corrupted nature and thus ascending to a higher spiritual state.

Kasatskii's humility proves to be the true way of faith. While monastery walls and prayers could not protect him from the impacts of the external world, stirring up his irritation or desire, his humility becomes a kind of shield that makes him invincible to contact with the outside world. When a man on a street comments (in French, thinking that Kasatskii does not

understand him) that he recognizes Kasatskii's good breeding, gives him twenty kopeks, and pats him on a shoulder, Kasatskii only thanks the man, takes off his hat and bows low before him:

Барин с барыней на шарабане, запряженном рысаком, и мужчина и дама верховые остановили их. Муж барыни ехал с дочерью верхами, а в шарабане ехала барыня с, очевидно, путешественником-французом.

Они остановили их, чтобы показать ему les pèlerins, [pilgrims] которые, по свойственному русскому народу суеверию, вместо того чтобы работать, ходят из места в место.

Они говорили по-французски, думая, что не понимают их.

У француза нашлась мелочь. И он всем роздал по двадцать копеек.

— Mais dites leur que ce n'est pas pour des cierges que je leur donne, mais pour qu'ils se régalent de thé [Tell him that I am giving him the money for tea] чай, чай, — улыбаясь, — pour vous, mon vieux [to you, old man], — сказал он, трепля рукой в перчатке Касатского по плечу.

— Спаси Христос, — ответил Касатский, не надевая шапки и кланяясь своей лысой головой.

И Касатскому особенно радостна была эта встреча, потому что он презрел людское мнение и сделал самое пустое, легкое — взял смиренно двадцать копеек и отдал их товарищу, слепому нищему. Чем меньше имело значения мнение людей, тем сильнее чувствовался Бог. (31:45–46)

The traveler's offensive comments and unceremonious physical contact do not incite Kasatskii's judgment, as they would have in the past. While Kasatskii had avoided touch before his spiritual transformation, feeling that his faith was endangered by physical contact with the world, he can now accept touch without distraction. The newly-gained ability to accept touch reveals that his true faith eventually immerses him in, rather than alienates him from, the world and its human community.

The haptic analysis of *Anna Karenina* conducted in this dissertation, as well as the above examples of haptic analysis of Tolstoi's other fictional works, demonstrates that the investigation of the haptic in Tolstoi's writings is fruitful research worth further pursuit. Haptic readings of Tolstoi's other fictional works can shed further light on the way in which his depictions of the act of touch reflect not only his interest in the accurate representation of human bodily or

psychological experiences, expressed through the corporeal, but also his meditations on the relationship between the spiritual and physical realms—and thus his moral message.

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